THE

CABIN AND PARLOR

OR,

SLAVES AND MASTERS.

BY

J. THORNTON RANDOLPH.

EMBELLISHED WITH MAGNIFICENT ILLUSTRATIONS.
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PREFACE.

THE merit of a book like the following depends entirely on its strict adherence to truth. It must describe things as they *generally* exist, and not *exceptional* instances, otherwise it is worthless.

Now should the author of this work be asked if it is a faithful transcript of real life, he would answer that he has himself witnessed all the scenes described, or those similar. He has, moreover, personally observed the condition of the operatives, both at the North and South.

But he is not willing to rest the question on his own unsupported assertion. For the degraded condition of the free colored population in the North he appeals to every candid inhabitant of New Jersey, Pennsylvania, and Southern Ohio, those being the localities where the free blacks exist in greatest numbers, and where consequently the best opportunities for

studying them occur. Thousands of persons will recognize the particular riots delineated in these pages. The black suburb still exists, so that any individual skeptical as to the fact, may visit it, and ascertain for himself that the picture is not overdrawn.

For what the author has said of the relative condition of the British operative and Southern slave, he quotes the authority of William Thomson, a Scotch weaver, who, in 1842, travelled through this country, supporting himself by manual labor. Mr. Thomson arrived here an abolitionist, but, after witnessing slavery in almost every State where it existed, and living for weeks among negroes on cotton plantations, he has asserted that he never saw one-fifth of the real suffering that he had beheld among the laboring poor of England. In addition he declares that, "the members of the same family of negroes are not so much scattered as are those of working men in Scotland, whose necessities compel them to separate at an age when the American slave is running about gathering health and strength."

The story of Horace Courtenay is no fiction. Those familiar with poverty in our Northern

cities will be able to recall numerous similar instances. In both him and Isabel the purpose of the author has been to exhibit the important fact, that many of what are popularly considered evils peculiar to slavery exist in all conditions of poverty.

The author has said nothing, in this volume, about "the compromises of the Constitution." Why? Because Washington and the other most influential framers of that instrument are known to have been God-fearing men, who must have had full assurance of right for all its provisions, or they would never have put their hands to it. It is but just to them to examine the grounds on which they acted. This has been attempted, in the present volume, though without any direct reference to them personally. If the popular mind addresses itself honestly and seriously to this question, the Constitution is in no danger; for what better could be done now for the interests of both races, if the Union had to be framed anew, than was done then? All the trouble that has arisen on this subject has sprung from a few, who virtually say to nine-tenths of their fellow citizens, "Stand aside, I am holier than thou."

The remark attributed to Uncle Peter, on refusing to be emancipated, was made to the author by one, who though formerly a slave, is now free, and who is altogether the most intelligent and energetic African he ever knew. Generally the language put into the mouth of Uncle Peter and others is drawn from memory.

The author disclaims, in advance, the idea of having written this work for mercenary considerations; as has been said of another, "to steal a part of the profits of a *lady's* hard-earned reputation." Such disingenuous attempts to silence reply to "Uncle Tom's Cabin," surely cannot be countenanced by Mrs. Stowe.

The book has been written in the hope that it may lead to broad and correct views on the subject of slavery. No real friend to the progress of humanity can desire to see the great cause of mankind put back by premature action; and if there is one truth more true than others, it is that social systems cannot be safely changed in a day.

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THE CABIN AND PARLOR;

OR,

SLAVES AND MASTERS.

CHAPTER I.

THE UNBIDDEN GUEST.

THE ball was at its height. The floor shook beneath the crowd of dancers. The music was of the liveliest. Never, in her palmiest days, had the Old Dominion witnessed a gayer festival.

In and out, one bright couple pursuing another, pair succeeding pair like birds in rapid flight, appearing, disappearing, re-appearing, now becoming involved apparently inextricably, and now suddenly and gracefully unwinding, with the wreathing of white arms and the flow of gossamer-like robes, went the gay dancers. And all this time moving with the music, and as it were inspired by it, till the spectacle assumed the aspect of a living personified harmony, for ever rising and falling, flashing and fading, advancing and receding, twisting and untwisting.

Suddenly the music stopped. But before the gentlemen could lead their panting partners to seats, it struck up again livelier than ever. As the first notes of "Zip

Coon" reeled giddily from his violin, the sable leader of the orchestra stamped his foot, and cried, "gentlemen to the right." Simultaneously, a score shot in the direction indicated, and the whole mass of dancers, as if started by an electric shock, were in laughing, giddy motion. Even the negroes, who had crowded to the back windows to look in, were carried away by the excitement, so that one of them, forgetting time, place, and every thing, shouted aloud, "Dat's 'um, Tony, gib 'em glory."

The music grew livelier and more exhilarating. Every one appeared to have caught the contagion of the overflowing hilarity which Tony, the leader, so unctuously imparted to his violin, and which came pouring intoxicatingly from it. Now the gentlemen were seen darting like a sudden flight of arrows, across the gay cotillion. Now the ladies swept around them like graceful birds at play. Now the four double quadrilles rose and fell, rose and fell, like waves in a narrow tide-way flashing up in silver moonlight. And now, with his fiddle-bow flying over the strings, his jolly shining face perspiring, and his foot keeping time, Tony cried, "promenade all around." Yet, just as the almost exhausted couples were about to stop, though half reluctant, he shouted again stentoriously, "swing corners," and went off into a perfect frenzy of fun, with immortal "Dan Tucker."

"Ki," said the negro, who had before spoken, again transported out of himself, "dat's de way, ole chile. Yer take de victory! Courten'y niggers 'll beat de world." And breaking from the crowd around the window, he dashed into a double-shuffle and swing corners on his own account, with any number of imaginary partners.

It was the birth-night ball of Isabel Courtenay, an only daughter, and just eighteen. The courtly mansion, in which the festivities were held, was a wide, double house, with a noble hall running through the centre, and had been built by the father of its present occupant, in the first quarter of the nineteenth century, at a cost that tradition declared to have been enormous. The magnificence of its staircase, said to have been copied from an ancient manorial hall in England, was the boast of the county. The furniture of the drawing-room had been purchased in Paris, and was still the most elegant in the neighborhood. The conservatory abounded with rare and costly plants. The library was a model, both for the arrangement of the apartment, and for the taste with which the books had been selected. The pictures in the dining-room, though few in number, were each a masterpiece. And the chambers, alike spacious in size, and beautiful in adornment, were the envy of all the matrons who saw them, and the terror of all the husbands who feared being teased into imitating them.

This lordly dwelling stood in the midst of its hereditary acres, which stretched away, on every side, until the hills bounded the prospect. A noble avenue of trees, nearly a mile long, led up from the road to the house. This avenue had been planted three quarters of a century previously, and long before the existing dwelling was erected, by the great grand-father of the present heir, who had bequeathed a large fortune, which his only child, a son, had greatly increased. This son had, in time, an only heir, who, by a fortunate marriage, still further enlarged the family wealth. The Courtenays had, therefore, during quite a century, held a leading position among the aristocracy of the Old Dominion.

It was not merely their reputation for wealth, however,

which had given them this prominent rank. Few were as well descended as they, and none more so. A Courtenay had entered England with the Conqueror; two several Courtenays had followed Richard of the Lion Heart to Palestine; Courtenays had fought in the wars of the Roses; and Courtenays, known to be of the same stock, though now but remotely connected, were still found among the nobility of England. The first Courtenay, who had emigrated to Virginia, had been the son of an earl, who, having offended his father, a bitter Hanoverian, by marrying into a Jacobite family, had left his native land and settled beyond the Blue Ridge, among the earliest pioneers of that region. The arms of the Courtenays, quartered with those of the gentry with whom they had intermarried, may yet be seen, carved on tomb-stones, in many an ancient grave-yard of the Old Dominion, though now corroded by time, and frequently half buried in rank weeds.

The present family consisted of Mr. Courtenay, his wife, and three children. Mr. Courtenay was yet in the prime of life. His person was still handsome, though exhibiting tendencies to corpulency. His frank, ruddy face was full of genial humor, and glowing with kindness of heart. And then his massive white hair; for the Courtenays early became grey, and, from father to son, their thick, snowy locks had been a hereditary pride and boast, for more than a century. To complete our picture of Mr. Courtenay, he usually wore a blue coat, with plain gilt buttons; for he said it was in such a coat he had been married, and he could not better show how great a blessing his wife had been, than by commemorating that auspicious day, by wearing a coat of the same color as he wore on that morning. "Blue may be too old-fashioned for young bucks," he would say, "but it is dear to me from

association, and I almost wish I could die in it." It may be supposed, without fear of a mistake, that such a man was hospitable, liked to see happy faces around him, and was adored equally by his more immediate family and by his dependents.

Mrs. Courtenay had possessed great beauty in her youth, and was still not without traces of it, though ill-health had destroyed her fine complexion, made her cheeks sunken, and given her a perceptible stoop. Her disposition had never been energetic, and sickness had rendered it less so than ever. She took but little pleasure in company, though her husband was so fond of it; yet all who came to Courtenay Hall were sure of a kind welcome. Of the world she knew little. She was, indeed, as simple, in this respect, as a child. Her delight was in the privacy of home, where, surrounded by her children, she was supremely happy.

The eldest, Isabel, had just returned from a northern boarding-school, accomplished and beautiful beyond a rival. The second was a bright, intelligent lad of thirteen, frank, loving, and full of energy, foreshadowing in manhood, a rare combination of all those qualities that win love, and those that command respect. The youngest was a delicate boy just entering his fifth summer, the pet of the entire household, but the idol of his mother.

To celebrate his daughter's birth-day, Mr. Courtenay had thrown open his mansion to all the notabilities within a circuit of twenty miles. For months the ball had been the talk of the county. Not a few young ladies had actually teased their papas into taking them to Baltimore, that they might themselves purchase their new dresses, and have them made up, on the spot, by a fashionable milliner. And such a galaxy of loveliness

now adorned the spacious rooms, and that loveliness heightened, wherever it was possible, by such aids of art, that even skeptical old bachelors, who never before had confessed to having seen a ball-room what it should be since the reign of Mrs. Madison, acknowledged that, for once, the dream-land of their youth had come back.

In the midst of this brilliant circle Isabel Courtenay moved, the acknowledged queen of the evening. Attired in a robe of simple white, with no ornament in her dark hair but a camilla, her rounded arms bare to the shoulder, and the delicate fabric of her dress hanging, like a cloud-wreath, about her graceful figure, she extorted admiration even from rival belles. Few, indeed, had a person and face to equal hers. Her forehead had the breadth, her eye-brows the majestic sweep of an antique statue. The small mouth and rounded chin were perfection. Unlike most of her sex, with a similar lofty style of beauty, she had a brilliant complexion. To crown all, her eyes were magnificent. The usual expression of her face was sweet and engaging. But if any thing awoke her scorn, her look had a haughty air indescribable. The carriage of her fine person was instinct with her high and heroic soul. No two women, indeed, struck the stranger as more dissimilar than Isabel and her mother. Mrs. Courtenay seemed a Desdemona. The daughter was now a Portia, and now a Queen Catharine.

And yet Isabel, with all this elevation and firmness of character, had a heart that was made for every gentler feeling. To have seen her just before the last set, as she leaned on the arm of her partner, listening to his words, the rich color mantling over her

cheek, and a soft dewy light melting from those glorious eyes, any one would have thought her as weak as the weakest of her sex. Indeed it was the gossip of the neighborhood that she was already plighted to her companion; and there were many reasons for believing the report. Two elderly spinsters in a corner had been, in fact, canvassing the question.

"What is his name?" said one, in a whisper.

"Mr. Frederick Noble."

"And he followed her from the North?"

"Yes. She knew his sister at school, and once spent a short vacation at his father's, where, they say, he fell madly in love with her."

"It looks like it, don't it? his following her here. Is he rich?"

"Oh! very. At least his father is one of the great Yankee manufacturers, who has more people at work in his mills than can be found on twenty plantations."

"And pays 'em less, I warrant. But he seems a handsome and polite young man enough. Only he hasn't exactly the look I like."

"What is the matter with him?"

"It's a way he has of half shutting his eyes, as if he feared people would look down into his heart. He only does it occasionally, or when others are talking to him. There, that's the look, don't you see it?"

"You're too severe. But, I recollect, you don't like the Yankees; and Mr. Noble suffers for New England in general. It is enough for me that Miss Courtenay loves him. He must be a superior person to have won her affections; for she is very discerning for one so young; and don't she look, to-night, like a princess?"

"I was never so enthusiastic an admirer of her as you are," replied the less genial old maid. "She is proud, even to being haughty; and too self-willed for a real lady. There's her mother now, what a model she is."

"I prefer Isabel's energy. Besides it is more like the Courtenays. There's Mr. Courtenay himself, mild as he is generally, let any one undertake to impose on him and he becomes like a lion. And his son will resemble him, if I don't mistake Horace's character. Oh! I love to see resolution, and pride, and all-conquering energy in a Courtenay: my mother was one, you know, and my heart warms to the old race."

"Then they really are engaged, Miss Wheaton?" said the other, returning to the subject.

"I don't know positively. At any rate it's not acknowledged."

"But is it denied?"

"Indeed," replied Miss Wheaton, smiling, "I have heard no one rude enough to ask the question."

"Well," answered the other, in no way rebuffed, "it looks like an engagement. See, now they go out into the portico. Really," she continued, a little tartly, "I must say it is rude for the daughter of the house to neglect all her company in this way, and devote herself to one person, even though that one is a lover."

Miss Wheaton was saved the necessity of a reply, by the approach of the host himself, who coming forward at the moment, his face beaming with kindliness, solicited the honor of her hand for the next set, if she was disengaged. Well he knew that she never had a partner, unless he, or some other elderly beau danced with her, for Miss Wheaton was now nearly

at her grand climacteric; but it was as natural for him to make others happy, as it was for him to seek happiness himself. He had just taken his partner's hand, when his eye fell on her companion, who had previously been concealed from his sight by the crowd.

"Ah! Miss Honeywood, you've come at last," he cried, stopping to shake hands with her. "We heard you were threatened with quite a serious illness, and feared we should lose the pleasure of your company. I'm glad to see you. Are you entirely well?"

Miss Honeywood kindled up with pleasure. The color came to her faded cheek, and she fanned herself nervously.

"Quite well, sir, quite well. It was only a slight cold I caught; you heard altogether too exaggerated an account of it. But is your health good? You're looking very well, allow me to say."

"Never was better in my life," replied Mr. Courtenay hilariously, "that is as a general rule. But, to tell the truth, ladies," and here he dropped his voice, as if he was speaking confidentially, "my head has been in a buzz, these two days, with Mrs. Courtenay's preparations, and those of Isabel, for this ball."

Both ladies laughed, for they knew that their host was at the bottom of all, and had really more to do with the ball than either wife or daughter: but it was his pleasant way of putting such things.

"However," he continued, "a good dance or two will settle down my excited brain. And to assist in my cure, I hope to have the pleasure of Miss Honeywood's hand for the next set, if she will honor me."

Miss Honeywood curtesied graciously; and the music striking up at that moment, Mr. Courtenay had hurried

off with his partner; and was now among the liveliest on the floor.

In and out, twisting and untwisting, appearing, disappearing, re-appearing, the music becoming gayer and madder at every involution, Mr. Courtenay led the flying dance. His partner was almost ready to drop, yet still he kept up the shifting panorama, for he had not a little of the heartiness of "the old time," and when at the head of a cotillion, took pleasure in tiring out the youngest. Those who at a house of less decided position, would have shrunk from such hilarity as vulgar, gave full vent to their natural joyousness in the Courtenay parlors. Thus, with their famous old host heading them, the three score of dancers flew in and out, laughing, jesting, sometimes almost leaping, wild with the giddy excitement of the exercise.

Isabel was not among them. She had strayed out, as we have seen, into the front portico. At first, her fine figure had been observed, every moment or two, crossing and recrossing the windows. Now and then she paused to gaze in on the dancers, or exchange a gay word with some couple near the casement; and now she had a smile, or a nod for some fair acquaintance some distance within. As the interest of the dance deepened, however, she and her companion had gradually become unnoticed. Every eye was now fixed on the quadrilles. No one thought of the two lovers outside.

This was the opportunity for which Mr. Noble had been waiting ever since he followed Isabel home. Circumstances had always prevented the *tete-a-tete* for which he longed. Though a guest at the house, Mr. Courtenay's attentions had been so assiduous, that the young man had found it impossible to be alone with Isabel. He determined to seize the present opportunity.

Isabel's heart beat tumultuously as she listened to his avowal. It had not been unexpected indeed. But no woman, however much she may be prepared for it, hears a declaration without agitation. Isabel trembled all over. And this, though fascinated by her lover's fine person, his high-bred manners, and his apparent nobility of soul; although not unwilling, by a little more perseverance on his part, to have a consent extorted from her.

She looked down, yet did not withdraw the hand he had taken; and the lover, re-assured by this, began anew his protestations.

But at that moment a shriek, sudden, sharp, and heart-rending, rose over all the noise of the dancers and music. He stopped abruptly.

"It is my mother's voice," cried Isabel, recognizing it even in that scream of agony, and, breaking away, she rushed towards the drawing room.

All was confusion when she reached it. The quadrille sets had broken up, and were now all in chaos. People were inquiring of each other, by looks and words, what was the matter; others were hurrying out of the apartment, as if to call servants; and others were shaking their heads, with looks of deep concern; while one or two of the female portion of the company were in tears. At the further end of the room a dense group had gathered, and thither Isabel flew, pale as ashes, her eyes wild with terror. The crowd parted solemnly before her, and entering its precincts, she saw her father lying on the floor, his head supported in her mother's lap, his countenance inflamed, and his breathing loud and stertorous.

At first she could not comprehend the meaning of this. Flinging herself on her knees, by the side of her mother, she took her father's insensible hand.

"What is it?" she cried.

But Mrs. Courtenay answered only by a moan.

"Oh! what is it?" And now she appealed to the spectators. "Will no one tell me? I never saw any thing like it before."

"Your father, I regret to say, has had an attack of apoplexy," replied the formal, elderly gentleman present. "We are about to have him bled. Let us hope it is nothing. Ah! here comes Dr. Worthington."

Isabel rose passively to her feet, that the physician might take her place. It seemed as if she was moving in a dream, as if all around was unsubstantial shadows. In a moment the lancet was out. But no blood flowed.

"It's no use," said Dr. Worthington, despondingly, when all attempts to bleed his patient had failed. "He may live some hours yet, but I fear there is little hope."

At these words, Mrs. Courtenay went into violent hysterics, and was carried to her own room, where her maids, and a few intimate friends attended on her. Isabel, though still stunned and paralyzed as it were, did not give way thus; but following those who carried her beloved father's form, saw that it was properly disposed on the bed, and then remained to watch it. In vain she was urged to leave her painful post. She shook her head, but made no reply in words; yet those who understood her best, knew she was inflexible.

One by one the guests departed, in silence, and many with tears; a few relatives alone remaining to comfort the family, in the great trial which impended over them.

For no one, who saw the patient, or had conversed with the physician, doubted that the hours of Mr. Courtenay were numbered.

One guest had come unbidden to the festival. It was Death.

CHAPTER II.

THE NEGRO QUARTER.

THE morning after the ball was a melancholy one on the plantation. At day-break Mr. Courtenay died, and when the news spread among the servants, the lamentations were loud and prolonged.

The enquiries from the neighbors were early and continued. The answering of all such was assumed by Uncle Peter, the patriarch of the servants, and who had long had the almost entire management of the farm. Having been with his master till the final moment, and weeping, closed the venerated eyes, he now took his place in the portico, no one else being left to execute this melancholy duty; for Charles, the body-servant of the deceased, a young mulatto, had gone to bed exhausted by grief and watching, almost as soon as Isabel had been led from the corpse.

Uncle Peter had scarcely seen the house decorously arranged as one of mourning, and assumed his sad post, when a colored servant, mounted on horseback, rode up and alighted. He was a respectable, solemn looking elderly negro, dressed in a neat dark suit, and with boots blacked to perfection.

"How's yer, ter day, Uncle Peter?" said the visitor, composing his features to a grave, woe-begone look.

Uncle Peter shook his head sadly, which was a sufficient answer. In a moment he asked politely:

"How's yer?"

Now the visitor was one of that class of negroes, by

no means small, who are always complaining. He replied, sighing,

"Not berry well."

"And how's d' ole woman?"

"Not berry well; rheumatiz."

"And de chil'en?"

"Dey's not berry well either. Dis world's a world ob trouble, Uncle Peter," he said, lugubriously shaking his head, "we should all ha' our lamps trimmed, for we don't know when de bridegroom 'll come."

Uncle Peter was a sincere Christian himself, and respected nothing so much as piety in others. But he had never been certain in his own mind that the speaker was not, what he called, "one of de sinners an' hypocrites;" for while his visitor was the loudest at a camp-meeting, he was also foremost in getting tipsy at a Fourth of July celebration; and Uncle Peter had no faith in professions that were not sustained by works.

So he made no reply to this bit of sententious piety. His own honest grief left him in no mood for any thing that was not real.

The visitor now proceeded to enquire after Uncle Peter's family, and then came, at last, to the real purpose of his visit.

"Missus sends compliments," he said, "an' wants to know, how Missus Courtenay and Miss Is'bel bears dis 'fliction."

"Dey lyin' down now," replied Uncle Peter. "Missus had 'stericks most all de night, an' Miss Is'bel keep goin' from one room ter todder till all was over. Missus now asleep, dey say."

"Wha' de matter wid Massa Courtenay? Missus say she reckon it a fit."

"Applepexy," answered Uncle Peter, repeating, as nearly as he could, a word which he had never heard before.

"Blessed Lord," ejaculated the visitor, utterly paralyzed by the hard word, which seemed to imply a disease of unknown awfulness and terror.

"Rush o' blood to der brain," explained Uncle Peter. "Massa was allers a subject for appleplexy, Doctor Worthington says. He axed me if I'd ebber heard him 'plain of a hummin in de ears; an' I'se recollec' dat I heard him say dat berry ting yesserday. Ah! dat ball," and he sighed. "Dat killed massa. He was dancin' at de berry moment he fell."

The visitor again shook his head.

"Dat dyin' at a ball terrible ting, Uncle Peter. De Lord allers cum, yer know, like a tief in de night. Poor Massa Courtenay!"

Uncle Peter, in spite of his grief, kindled up at this.

"Look he'ar, nigger," he said, "don't yer cum a slanderin' dis way. Massa was a Christian, if ebber dar one, only he 'Piscopalian, an' dey 'low white folks as well as cullard ones to dance. Gen'l Washington was a 'Piscopalian hisself. I'se reckon dat massa an' he singin' before de throne, dis minnit, in de white robes of de Lamb. David, de great king, danced before der ark. Massa been ready for de summons, dese many year, as a good Christian allers should: and I a'most seed shining angels, flyin' wid him to Heaven, when he died last night, de Lord knows I did."

The rebuked listener stood awe-struck. He did not doubt Uncle Peter's assertion. For so vividly does the negro realize what to others is but imagination, that

he believed, as faithfully as Uncle Peter himself, in the actual bodily presence of angels, at the death-bed.

"Did massa Courtenay ebber speak," said the visitor, after a solemn pause, "after de fit seized him?"

"Nebber," said Uncle Peter, and as the death-bed scene rose again to his memory, the tears rolled down his old cheeks. "Miss Is'bel, she knelt by de bed, sayin', 'If he'd only speak one word, or jist bless his own chile.' But death, de ugly skeleton, he stood at de oder side, and wouldn't let go his grip. I seed from de first, which was gwine to hab de victory."

One gossip after another came, Uncle Peter having to rehearse to each the melancholy tale, until, about noon, Charles relieved him from his post. Then the old man sought his cabin to secure some sleep in turn.

The cabin of Uncle Peter, like all in the quarter, was neatly white-washed, and was the first one you reached as you approached from the house. It had, besides the vegetable plot in the rear, a neat little flower garden in front, where Aunt Vi'let, his wife, delighted to cultivate certain favorite gaudy plants. Over the door-way there rose a rude arbor, which Uncle Peter had constructed in his leisure moments, and which supported a honey-suckle that, in its season of bloom, made the whole air around fragrant. Through the door, which stood usually invitingly open, a glimpse was caught of a spotlessly clean room within, which was somewhat better furnished than that of the other cabins. But no one had eyes for the more material objects there, when they had once caught sight of Aunt Vi'let.

What resemblance the parents of the good dame had seen between her chubby, ebon face in infancy, and the poetical flower after which she was named, we

cannot say; but Violet she had been called; and Aunt Vi'let, for short, had been her title now for quite a generation. The original disparity between the name and person had grown with years. Aunt Vi'let, instead of being a small, delicate, characterless woman, as one would have supposed, was fat, bustling, and energetic, and had a most decided will of her own. There was but one person she had ever been in awe of. You will think that had been her master. It was not so. She bowed to nobody but Uncle Peter, and him she reverenced as the best and wisest of men, and kindest of husbands. Nor can we say that she was far wrong.

Aunt Vi'let had come into the family at the time of Mrs. Courtenay's marriage, having been that lady's personal attendant. She had subsequently married Uncle Peter, and settled down in this cabin, though the old relations between her and her mistress still existed to such an extent that, in sickness or other sorrow, she was the first one for whom Mrs. Courtenay asked. It had been Aunt Vi'let, who, rushing into the ball-room, had suggested that the hysterical wife should be carried up stairs; and she it was who had attended Mrs. Courtenay through every paroxysm all night.

The good dame had returned some hours before, to her cabin, where she awaited Uncle Peter's wakening. With affectionate care she had prepared for him the nicest dish her larder afforded, a young, tender chicken from her own brood, and the never-failing corn-cake, in the preparation of which she was considered, and we may as well honestly admit, considered herself unrivalled.

Uncle Peter awoke about sunset. But savory as the supper was, and long as he had fasted, the viands appeared to have no temptations for him.

"Try a bit, honey, do," said Aunt Vi'let pleadingly, "for you 've eat nothin to-day, an' 'll be gittin sick." And the tears rose to her affectionate eyes.

"'Spec I nebber shall eat agin as I used ter. To tink I hab toted massa when he but a chile, and dat now he dead an' gone, while I'se left, an ole, withered tree. Oh! dat ebber I should a lived to see dis day."

The big tears rolled down his cheeks as he sobbed, rather than spoke these words; and his still powerful chest heaved, like that of a child, with emotion.

Aunt Vi'let did not speak for several minutes. But she silently mingled her tears with his. She needed no human learning to teach her how best to afford consolation. It came with woman's instinct. At last she said,

"Dare is one comfort dat Miss Is'bel hab. Dat young gemman from de North, dey say she gwine to marry, is here; and dat'll be someting to 'sole her in dis great affliction."

"Dunno. Dis no time ter tink of marryin, an' givin in marriage, when massa lyin dead in de house. We know someting 'bout dat feelin, for when our chile died de whole sky seemed to turn black, an' we wanted ter see no one."

"I'll nebber forget," sobbed Aunt Vi'let, her whole woman's nature swelling up at these words, "how kind dey all were at dat drefful time. How massa an' missus cum ebbry day. How Miss Is'bel brought down de pretty dress dey put on him in de coffin, one of her own frocks she wore when a baby. Oh! it 'pears hard in de Lord ter make dem suffer, who were allers so good ter odders."

It was now Uncle Peter's task to offer consolation. Beautiful is this feature in true grief, even among

the humblest, that it makes each sufferer forget, in turn, his or her sorrow, for awhile, in the effort to soothe the other.

"It ain't no more dan our blessed Lord suffered. He was a man of sorrows an' 'quainted wid grief. He bore all dis for poor sinners too, for de slave as well as de master, comin' down from his throne of glory to be crucified on de tree of Calvary."

Thus dwelling on the virtues of the deceased, and consoling themselves at the fount of all true consolation, the sunset passed away and twilight approached. The supper had been only partially despatched, but both had long since ceased eating, when, through the gathering dusk, the form of Charles, the late Mr. Courtenay's body-servant, was seen approaching.

Charles was apparently about twenty-five years old. His light and graceful figure, as he walked, had that swaying motion, which seems peculiar to races of tropical blood. His eyes were large, bright and intelligent. Yet his face, expressive as it was, gave the idea of weakness of character. His attire was somewhat dandyfied. Having always lived at the mansion, where he heard only the most refined conversation, he had a vocabulary almost as correct as that of his late master.

"Missus has woke, Aunt Vi'let," he said, "and asked for you."

Aunt Vi'let immediately began to clear away the supper-table. But first she said,

"How Cora bear all dis?"

Cora was Isabel's own maid, a graceful and lovely mulatto, married to Charles. But little older than Isabel, Cora had been first the playmate, and afterwards the attendant of her young mistress. Her duties, how-

ever, had always been of the lightest kind. To take charge of Isabel's wardrobe; to bring a fan, a handkerchief, or a bonnet; to dress the hair of her young mistress; and to sit at some fine sewing, while Isabel read, often aloud, had been the chief occupation of Cora. In return the mulatto maid loved her master's daughter with all the ferver of her impassioned race.

"Cora is as well as can be expected," said Charles, with an air of importance, "considerin' how broken-down she is at Miss Is'bel's grief."

"Poor young ting!"

But whether Aunt Vi'let meant Isabel, or Cora, did not appear. Charles thought the latter. Uncle Peter knew it was the former.

Just as Aunt Vi'let was setting out, and Uncle Peter had taken his hat to accompany her, the two younger children came tumbling noisily in. The good dame turned back, made a dart at the boy, who was also the oldest, caught him, and giving him a hearty shake, said,

"How dare yer make sich a noise, yer good-for-nuffin little nigger, an' yer massa lyin dead in de house up yonder? Git yer sister yere, Pomp, an' sit still in dis yer place, till I cum back. D'yer har?" And she pinched his ear. "Stop dat now. If yer make a noise while I'm gwine to de house, I'll skin yer, sure as I'm a livin woman, 'deed I will."

"You're hard on the boy, Aunt Vi'let," said Charles, as they left the cabin. "He don't know any better."

It was an unlucky speech for Charles. Aunt Vi'let flared up immediately, answering tartly. "He shall be larned better. Yer needn't 'spose, sa," and she gave her head a toss worthy of a queen, "dat yer an' Cora hab

all de quality manners ob de place. Spec I know'd someting afore eider of yer was born."

CHAPTER III.

THE BEGGARY OF THE ORPHAN.

It was a fortnight after the funeral of Mr. Courtenay. The shutters of the mansion, and the great hall door still remained closed, and all was silent and sad about the place.

In the boudoir, up stairs, opening out of her chamber, sat Isabel. She wore a frock of black de laine, cut high in the throat, and with long sleeves; yet so shapely was her figure, and so neatly did the dress fit, that she looked more beautiful than many on whom the utmost aids of art and wealth had been bestowed. Her hair was brushed plainly over her temples. The large eyes looked larger now than ever, and were surrounded by a dark rim, showing how her great sorrow had worn down the physical and nervous system.

The boudoir in which she sat had originally been a room intended for her maid-servant. But just before her return from school, her father had caused it to be entirely refitted, and furnished, without regard to expense, for its present purpose. The paper on the walls was of silver and rose-color, matching the curtains, and the brocatelle of the chairs and tiny lounge were of a similar color, looped up with silver cords. The little centre table, which stood in the middle of the apartment, was of ja-

pan, inlaid with mother of pearl. The carpet was a luxurious Axminster, the ground white, strewed with boquets of rich flowers. A small hanging book-case, in which were miniature editions of the best poets, adorned one side of the room. On the opposite wall hung a solitary picture, a sunrise scene in Italy; a warm glowing landscape, and painted with exquisite skill.

This room, always a favorite retreat for Isabel, had become dearer to her than ever since her father's death. Every object in it recalled his affection for her, and brought vividly back that kindness of heart, which was always seeking for some new means to please those whom he loved. For not a piece of furniture there, not even a book but had been selected by him, while the arrangement of the whole apartment had been entirely his taste. The boudoir was, in reality, a surprise, of which Isabel had known nothing, until after her arrival at home. It was, therefore, natural that she should love to linger in the room, and that she should refuse to allow the disposition of a single article to be changed. "As he arranged it," she said to Cora, "so shall it remain."

She sat at the table, reading her Bible, which was open at the sermon on the Mount. For the past fortnight that volume had not been out of her hands, except when she was with her mother, or while she slept; for however we may neglect the Word of God, when death enters our household it is only from its pages we can draw consolation. But Isabel had never neglected her Bible. It had been from childhood her daily study, and she found it now, in very truth, "a present help in time of need."

Suddenly a footstep in the adjoining chamber attracted her attention. Cora sat sewing near the door,

in full view; and as Isabel glanced up, she saw the mulatto lift her finger to the intruder.

"You will not disturb me. What is it?" said Isabel. "Has 'ma awoke?"

"It is Charles," replied Cora.

"Does he wish me?"

Cora rose and went to her husband.

"Dr. Worthington is below," she said, returning in a moment, "and wishes to see you."

"Me? Not mamma."

"Charles says his words were, that he wished to see you particularly."

"I will go down to receive him. No; show him up here, for if he desires to see me alone, and ma should awake, this will be the best place. What can he want?"

There was a vague feeling of mistrust in Isabel's mind, which, perhaps, her reverie had caused, or, perhaps, it was a merciful foreshadowing of the evil to come, that led her to speak thus.

Dr. Worthington soon made his appearance. He had a kind benevolent face, with a head nearly bald, just the physiognomy to inspire confidence. He was Mr. Courtenay's principal executor, and though Isabel had seen little of him for several years, she remembered his attending her when a child, and had that affection for him which we all feel for family physicians of long standing.

"Good morning, doctor," she said. "Bring a chair for the doctor." And turning to her maid, she continued, "You need not leave the chamber. Pray, doctor, sit down."

"How is mamma, this morning? And how is Miss Courtenay herself?" said the doctor blandly. "I must

insist on both of you taking more exercise. You want fresh air."

A pang passed over Isabel's face, as if the mere mention of the world without was agony to her, but it was gone in a moment.

"I am quite well," she answered. "But I fear mamma is worse. She gains no strength."

"Hem, I must see her before I leave," said Dr. Worthington, musingly; and then he suddenly fell into silence.

This manner, so different from his usually communicative one, recalled to Isabel that the doctor had wished to see her particularly, which she had forgotten for a minute. So she spoke:

"You have something to say to me, doctor; have you not?"

"I have, my dear young lady," was his reply, as he kindly took her hand, "and it is most unpleasant news. Can you bear it?"

Isabel smiled faintly.

"I can bear any thing now," she said.

"God grant you may be able. But prepare yourself for the worst. I came to you, because I thought you had more fortitude than your mother."

It was impossible but that, with such a serious prelude, Isabel's heart should beat faster. What could this terrible news be? Her thoughts were all in confusion.

"Doctor," she said, "pray speak out. This suspense, which you think a mercy, is not such."

"You believe so," he answered sadly. "Ah! my dear young lady."

With these words he took out his spectacles, selected some papers from a bundle he produced from

his pocket, and proceeded, Isabel's nervousness increasing during these ominous preliminaries.

"I yesterday received, as your late honored father's executor," he said, "a letter from Messrs. Skin & Flint, factors and merchants of New York, which reveals the most painful state of affairs in regard to my late friend's estate. It seems that your grandfather, towards the close of his life, lost largely, and that your father, though he made many efforts, was never able to release himself from the debts then incurred. I judge, from what the letter says, that your grandfather's losses arose from speculations, probably in tobacco, in which the original house of I. Skin & Co. participated. Being the factors of the plantation, and possessing facilities for raising money, they appear to have taken what is called negotiable paper, that is promissory notes, for old Mr. Courtenay's share of the deficit, instead of a mortgage on the estate. The debt was kept a secret, in this way, in this neighborhood. These notes seem to have continued to accumulate, by the annual addition of interest, from that time until the present. On three or four occasions there have been payments on account, one of them evidently, from the date, immediately after your father sold his James' river plantation; but these were mere drops in the stream, which has gone on, deepening in spite of them. Yet, large as this indebtedness was, it was not sufficiently great to give your father immediate inconvenience. He was a sanguine man, you know, and doubtless hoped, in time, to make some provision for it. But, about three weeks ago, almost simultaneous in fact with his own decease, a house in New York, for whom he had been induced to endorse, in order to facilitate the discounting of his own bills,

failed, and this has brought on a crisis. I don't exactly understand this last transaction, for Skin & Flint, who appear also to have been exchanging paper with the bankrupts, have managed to escape without loss, being secured in some way or other. There is no doubt, however, that your father, whether by fair means or foul, is utterly ruined. I have been up, nearly all night, puzzling over the accounts, and though there are many charges that do not look honorable, indeed the whole transaction is made usurious by the enormous commissions and exchange charged, yet they are all, I fear, legal, and will have to be paid. The worst is, that Skin & Flint hold a judgment bond, which they have sent down to have executed, so that, by to-morrow at least, the officers will be here. The knowledge of this fact left me no time for delay. I was compelled to come to you, without preliminary. But, my dear young lady, your fortitude surprises me."

Isabel, indeed, though deadly pale, neither wept, nor exclaimed at the doctor's story. She had listened, on the contrary, in stony silence. But, in these five minutes, she had ceased to be a girl, and had become a woman. Natures like hers rally against blows such as this, rising up to conquer fortune, instead of succumbing.

There was silence for a full minute. At last she said, her mouth twitching.

"My poor mother!"

"God help her!" said the doctor

Again there was silence. Then Isabel asked.

"Must we leave the house?"

"Not at once. No, I can arrange that, I am sure. At least you can remain until after the sale."

"Don't you think any thing will be left? Not even enough for mamma to live upon?"

"I fear not."

A slight shudder passed over Isabel.

"We are positively beggars then." She spoke with effort.

"The claim will sweep all away."

"And the servants. Must they go also?"

"Certainly my dear: they form a valuable part of the estate, you know."

"All?"

"All!"

Isabel burst into tears.

"Oh! this is terrible," she said finally. "They love us so, and are so helpless. I could bear my own misfortunes, doctor, but to think of them!"

"They will suffer far less than you, my dear," said the doctor, taking her hand with fatherly compassion, "don't distress yourself on their account. With them it will be only a change of masters, probably they will not even leave the neighborhood. But with you," and his voice suddenly became husky, while a mist grew over his spectacles, "with you, my child—Ah! you don't, you can't realize it yet—and God help you through it."

Isabel was touched by his sympathy. She pressed his hand thankfully. Gradually she recovered the control of herself.

She dashed the tears from her eyes. "You shall see no more of this," she said. "I shall need to be cheerful in order to keep up mamma's spirits. But the thought of the servants made a child of me. Poor Cora!"

Cora might, with more propriety, thought the doctor, say poor Isabel!

After awhile Isabel looked up, with a faint attempt to

smile. But the haggard expression of her countenance cut to the doctor's heart. He would rather have seen tears than that smile.

"My mind is confused as yet," said Isabel, "and I am unable what to say, or do. I suppose there is no alternative but to submit?"

"Why, as for that," began the doctor, "We might fight, as the lawyers say; that is, contest the matter so as to gain time."

"But would that benefit us in the end? Would there be a hope of obtaining evidence to show that any part of this claim is false?"

"I fear the claim is correct, in a mercantile sense, at least."

"But you don't think it an honorable one."

"I do not."

"Is it such a debt as my father, if alive, would pay?"

The physician hesitated. He would have given much to have been able to answer in the negative; but he knew his late friend's strict notions of integrity too well to hesitate.

"He would pay it, though it beggared him."

"Then so will we," answered Isabel premptly. "There shall be no stain on his reputation."

"Do you mean that you will make no attempt to delay the payment? Am I to surrender at once?"

"Of what use would it be to contest the debt? In the end we should have to pay it. Besides the law-suit would cost heavily, would it not?"

"It would."

"Then it seems to me that it would be foolish, as well as dishonorable to resist. No, let those men have all, and immediately."

"The harpies," muttered the doctor, in an angry undertone, "the swindlers."

Isabel said nothing. It was too much to expect of human nature, that she should undertake the defence of those who were reducing her to poverty; yet she had too much charity to join heartily with the doctor: she reflected that, after all, Skin and Flint might be doing no more than what they considered just and fair. "They act according to their light, perhaps," she said to herself.

"If you will be kind enough to come over, doctor," resumed Isabel aloud, "so as to be here when the officers arrive, I should be much obliged to you. Mamma, I know, will be very nervous; and I am but a poor, weak girl."

"A weak girl!" exclaimed the doctor, "you are a hero."

"And brother," continued Isabel, not noticing this remark except by a heightened color, "is both young and high-spirited, so that I fear he may say something to irritate the officers, unless an older person is present to check him."

"I will come. I intended to," replied the doctor, "from the first. You may command me in every thing, night as well as day, till this unfortunate affair is over."

"Thank you," answered Isabel. "If you will see that we get our rights, till the sale is made, that will be sufficient. By that time I shall have consulted with ma, and determined on our future course. I suppose I must do as they do in the North."

"What is that?"

"A great many young ladies support themselves and families there—some by teaching school."

"The devil," said the doctor, for the idea of one as luxuriously bred as Isabel, having to earn her livelihood, deprived him of his self-command.

"It is all I am fit for, I fear," said Isabel, mistaking his meaning. "You really don't think I ought to do something else?"

"No, nor that; for it will kill you. Teach school, my dear! Why you don't know what you say."

"I must do that, or starve, or beg," said Isabel, with another faint attempt at a smile. "Starve we cannot. Live on charity we must not, for that would be sin, at least so long as I can labor. You see I have no foolish prejudice against work."

"You may call them foolish prejudices, and in one sense they are. But yet the worst thing a young lady can do, especially in the South here, is to undertake to earn her own living; for it practically prevents her from ever making a desirable match."

"Marrying is the last thing I was thinking of, doctor," said Isabel: then, after a pause, she sighed, and continued. "I will do my duty, let the consequences be what they may."

The doctor reflected to himself that she was thinking of her lover, when she spoke those words; and he was vexed for having recalled the subject to her. "Ten to one the fellow deserts her, now that she is poor," he soliloquized. "By Jove, I wish I had the right, or he would afford me the excuse: if he did, I would cane him within an inch of his life." He did not, however, give utterance to this hearty wish: but, suddenly remembering the time, drew out his watch, and said,

"I must go now, Miss Courtenay; for I have much to do, to-day. But I will be here again, before night,

and, perhaps, take a bed in the house, as I must not miss being present when the officers come, and they may arrive at any hour now."

He left Isabel with these words, and was soon driving rapidly away. Yet, busy as he was, he kept his word, and returned to sleep at Courtenay Hall. But, in the meantime, he had found leisure to stop to his own house, for a hasty cup of tea, over which he expatiated to his wife on the courage and heroic resolution of Isabel.

"Molly," he said with a sigh, for the pair were childless, "I would give all I am worth, or ever expect to be, for such a daughter as this. Only think of one, delicately nurtured like her, undertaking to support her entire family; for I see that this is her fixed resolution, and one she will persist in, or die attempting it."

"Oh! it's hard for one, to whom luxuries have become necessaries," said Mrs. Worthington, "to have to do without even the common comforts of life. Insolvency, to people like the Courtenays, is a very different thing from insolvency to ordinary folk."

"What must the difference be," said Dr. Worthington, with startling energy, "between Isabel and her servants. To her it is loss of position, fortune, the fair hopes of life, perhaps even health, for she must inevitably break down under the unaccustomed labor and privations she will have to undergo. But to them it is merely a change of masters."

"Yes, for the neighbors won't allow any of the families to be separated.'

"Of course not. We read of such things in novels sometimes. But I have yet to see it in real life, except in rare cases, or where the slave has been guilty

of some misdemeanour, or crime, for which, in the North, he would have been imprisoned, perhaps, for life."

CHAPTER IV.

THE FUGITIVE SLAVE.

THE night of the day, on which Dr. Worthington had called on Isabel, Uncle Peter and his wife were about retiring, when a low knock was heard at the door.

"Who' dar?" said Uncle Peter, pausing, with his breeches half off, while Aunt Vi'let popped into bed, and drew the sheet over her face. "Who dat at dis onreasonable hour?"

"It is I—Charles—are the children abed?"

"Abed an' asleep. Wha' de matter? Wait a minnit, an' I'll open de door."

"I wouldn't disturb you," said Charles, "only it's of great importance. I want to see Aunt Vi'let, too."

"My blessed sakes," said the old dame, bustling out of bed, and hastening to array herself. "Wha' de matter? Hab any ting gone for done wrong wid missus, or Miss Isabel? Ax him, ole man."

"Nothing's the matter at the house," replied Charles. "I am sorry to have disturbed you," he added, as Uncle Peter, the moment after, undid the door.

But Uncle Peter, like all his race, was too eager to learn the news, to feel the least bit disturbed. He did not say this, however, but waited, with becoming gravity, for Charles to speak first.

His words came as soon as he had, by glancing toward the corner, seen that the children were really asleep.

"We're all going to be sold to Georgia," he said, sinking into the chair, which Uncle Peter offered him.

"Sold ter Georgy!"

"Sakes alive!"

These were the simultaneous exclamations of Uncle Peter and Aunt Vi'let, the latter giving additional emphasis to her words by holding up both hands.

"Yes, master's ruined, and we're to be sold. I and Cora, you and Aunt Vi'let, all of us."

"De Lord's will be done," said Uncle Peter, after a pause. "But are it for sure?'

"Cora heard Dr. Worthington tell it to Miss Isabel, this morning."

"Massa ruined? Dat am a berry 'spicious sarcumstance. Am Cora sure?" pertinaciously asked Uncle Peter.

Charles detailed to his eager listeners, as well as his excited state enabled him, the series of events by which the Courtenays had been reduced to beggary. His own comprehension of the affair was none of the clearest, Cora having given him but a disconnected narrative of the events, and he did not succeed in conveying to his hearers, even as coherent an idea of the truth as he possessed himself. His circumstantiality produced the conviction, however, on Uncle Peter's mind, that ruin, and it utter, had really overtaken the family of his late kind master.

"De Lord a been merciful," was his somewhat strange language, when he arrived at this conclusion. But his next words showed the train of thought which led to this exclamation. "T'would a broke massa's heart, had

he been alive; an' so der Lord took him home, before de storm cum. Glory ter his name!"

Aunt Vi'let began to sob aloud.

"Hush," said Charles, looking uneasily at the children. "What I've to say, must have no listeners. What are you going to do, Uncle Peter?"

"Trust in de Lord, Charles. I hab trusted in him dese forty years, an' allers found him a good massa; an' I ain't gwine to gib Him up now, nor He me, I trust."

"Dat's de true spirit," sobbed Aunt Vi'let, looking into his face with mingled love and reverence, "yer stick to der Lord, and der Lord will stick to yer."

Charles looked discomposed at this turn of the conversation. Glancing again curiously towards the sleeping children, he said, almost in a whisper,

"But they're goin' to sell us all to Georgia, I say. How are we to escape that?"

"Spec dare some mistake in dat," replied Uncle Peter, stoutly. "I nebber knew of sich a ting in dese parts, 'cept where some nigger 'd been berry bad. Yer didn't hear 'em say dat, 'xactly in dem words, did yer?"

"No, at least Cora didn't, and it was she that heard it all, you know."

"Sposed not," drily said Uncle Peter.

"But, though they didn't say it, it may still happen. Any one, you know, can buy us."

"Der Lord is good," repeated Peter. "He hab allers put into de hearts of de neighbors, in sich sarcumstances, ter keep de poor colored folk togeder. I hab no fear of bein' sold to Georgy."

Charles answered abruptly,

"But I'm not goin' to stake the risk. I shall go North."

"Run away?" said Uncle Peter, starting back.

"My blessed sakes!" cried Aunt Vi'let, half lifting up her hands, half extending them to push Charles from her.

"And I came," sullenly continued Charles, "to get you to go along with me. You are a sensible man, Uncle Peter, and could get ahead North. Aunt Vi'let, too, knows something of the ways there, and could be a help to all of us."

Uncle Peter had been looking severely at the speaker, during the delivery of these words, until Charles fairly flinched before him. Now he suddenly advanced, and seizing his visitor by the arm, said energetically,

"Wha' yer take me for, sar? Yer tink I'm gwine ter desert missus an' Miss Isabel in dis dere trouble? Ha, dat reach yer conscience?" he exclaimed, seeing Charles wince at his words, and with rapid, but rude eloquence, he went on: "Dis yer 'spensation, I know, be hard for poor flesh to put up wid. To lose a good massa, an' get one p'r'aps not so good, p'r'aps bad, berry hard ting, 'specially for ole man like me, who hab lib on dis place dese sixty year. But dat nothin', dat nothin' to what Miss Isabel hab ter go through wid. Poor white folks hab a wus life dan de wus slave; and she now gwine to be, yer say, poorer dan any of us. She no longer hab even a house to lib in; she hab no one to wait on her; she hab to work for herself, wid her own lily hands."

"De good Lord, har' dat," interrupted Aunt Vi'let.

Uncle Peter, unmindful of the interlude, went on.

"De white gemmen dat hab come to missus's house, an' dat pretend dey ready to kiss de hem of her garment, dey not know her now she poor, an' hab ter teach school. An' den dere missus, sick half de time;

an' young massa, an' de baby! An' dey all hab dis trial, an' Miss Isabel hab to bear her own, an' ter help 'em to bear dar's. Yet yer talk of runnin' away," he exclaimed, with a burst of hearty contempt, "bekase yer fear bein' sold to Georgy, when dey bear, widout complaint, what is ten times worse to dem dan bein sold to Georgy to yer."

Charles, for a minute, was cowed and silenced. But, rallying, he rejoined,

"They will not be separated: and Cora and I would be."

"Tell yer agin, we won't be sold to Georgy," said Uncle Peter, half angrily. "But 'spose yer am. 'Spose Cora an' yer be separated. Is dat worse dan sure to happen to Miss Isabel an' de rest? Tink dey gwine to be 'lowed to stay togedder?"

"Why who is goin' to separate them?" And Charles spoke in undisguised wonder.

"De Lord, de Lord is gwine to do it; he allers at de bottom of all our chastisements. Dey cannot stay togedder, when dey are poor folks, don't you know dat, 'specially as dey all women or children? No; de one will go to de right, an' de oder to de left, dat each may make a libin. Eh! de life of de slave is hard, I 'fess. But harder is dat of de white man in season, 'specially when de Lord sends poverty on de widders an' orphans."

"But my staying won't be of use to them," sulkily said Charles.

"'Spose dat all de debts paid widout yer. 'Spose yer hab staid. Tink Miss Isabel part from yer den? No; she keep Cora to wait on missus, an' hire you out, maybe, to git part of yer wages."

"I want my wages myself. I am entitled to them."

"Am yer? See dar. I hab two children, and if I was free, dey would owe dere food, clothes, ebbery ting ter me. Tink it right for 'em as soon as dey begin to be worth someting, to run away from me. Dat yer case, Charles, 'zactly. Massa feed yer all de time yer a chile, an' keep yer doin' nothin' till just now; an' when he dies dis way, an' dere a chance of yer bein' of sarvice to missus, yer runs off to de North. Yer call dat honesty, d' yer? Yer hab no idee of duty. De Lord 'lighten yer, Charles, an' gib yer grace ter do what am right."

"I would have staid with master, if he had lived," said Charles, attempting to justify himself. "But I can see no good of staying now. I want to be a free man."

"'Pears to me we would all like to be free, ef we could be free as massa was, or de doctor. But I 'spec dat bein' a free colored man at de North am not berry grand, ef all I hab heerd be true. To be rich, white free man is one ting; to be poor, black free man is anodder."

"De Lord knows dat am true," broke in Aunt Vi'let, who had been an eager listener to all. "When I was North with missus, dis many years ago, I saw how de poor colored pussuns lived; an' dey say dat it is worse now dan ebber. Only de oder day I heerd massa tell missus dat a colored pussun had died of hunger in one of de cities, I forget which."

"Har dat?" said Uncle Peter, "I nebber 'spected it so bad."

"And dey hab mobs dar, which burn down de

houses of de poor colored folks, for dar no one ter take dar part, as a massa does here."

"Don't the law take their part?" said Charles.

"'Pears I hab heerd of Massa Law, but sure I neber saw him. But dis I did see. I seed burnin' houses lighten' up de sky at night, an' heerd dat innocent women and children had to fly to de fields for life, an' ter sleep on de damp grass: an' dat I nebber had to do here yet."

"Ebbry sort of people," said Uncle Peter, "hab dar troubles. Yer gwine to try an' run away from some of your'n, Charles; but yer'll find dat dey will follur yer. Dey go 'bout like a roarin lion. Nor am dat all. Yer gwine to go clar agin duty, for de Bible says, 'Servants obey yer massas'; an' be sure 'yer sin,' dese am de bery words, 'will find yer out.' 'Deed it will."

"De good Lord knows it," echoed Aunt Vi'let.

"It's no use talkin', Uncle Peter," said Charles, breaking a prolonged silence, that succeeded these words. "I am going to try it. The truth is, that there is nobody about here who will buy me, and give me so little to do as master did, and I'm not going to slave like a nigger."

"Ah! dat it," said Uncle Peter, shaking his head. "I feered as much. But de Lord send yer grace to see de evil of yer way, before it be too late."

"I shall go to-morrow night."

Both Uncle Peter and Aunt Vi'let started, and looked at each other meaningly. The movement awakened the suspicions of Charles.

"You'll not betray me," he said anxiously, "I mean well to both of you."

"Dunno," replied Uncle Peter stoutly. "'Pears ter

me yer played de part of de debbil, a temptin' me and dis ole woman: offerin' us de kingdoms of dis world. But de Lord hab tuk all yer strength away."

"Am Cora gwine too?" This was Aunt Vi'let's question.

"She is."

"Sakes alive! I nebber believed dat of her. To run away from Miss Isabel, arter all she hab done for her."

"But she can't be with Miss Isabel. When I told her that, she consented to go, especially as I was determined. Come, come, Uncle Peter," and he changed his somewhat sullen tone for one of entreaty, "think again of this matter. Go with us. You can easily take the young children, and those that are grown up will follow, when they know that you have gone. See here, I will leave this tract till to-morrow, if you will promise to read it in the cabin here, and let no one see it."

As he spoke he produced a little pamphlet, with a vignette at the head, representing a kneeling, manacled slave, having around him the motto, "Am I not a man and a brother?"

"Whar dis cum from?" asked Uncle Peter, after silently examining the picture, and spelling out a sentence or two.

"I got it from a safe hand."

"Did yer ebber see any ting like dat?" said the honest old man, emphatically striking the picture with his forefinger.

"But such things do happen, further down south."

"Dunno," replied Uncle Peter stubbornly. "Nebber seed any ting of it. 'Spec dese abolitioners no more de brodder of de colored man dan a good massa here. If

dey am in some tings, dey not in oders. 'Pears to Uncle Peter, for all he heerd, dat dey less so."

"Dat's de Lord's truth," ejaculated Aunt Vi'let. "Nebber heerd of a white man north bein' more willin' to marry a black gal dan a white man here. Dat don't look like bein' a brodder."

No words can describe the indignant look and gesture of Aunt Vi'let as she spoke. There was silence for awhile, when Charles moved toward the door.

"You won't betray me, at any rate," he interrogatively said. "You won't for Cora's sake, even if not for mine?"

With these words he left the cabin. Uncle Peter and Aunt Vi'let watched him, for some time; and then the former said.

"I nebber thought dat Charles would hab done dis. De Lord hab mercy on him. I feared he 's gone done for his immortal soul for ebber."

The regret of Charles, at the failure of his negotiation, was not less, though it was of a different kind. Notwithstanding his advantages in education and manners over Uncle Peter, he felt the superiority of the latter in strong, native sense, and in single-hearted purity of character. To find the old man disapproving of the step he was about to take, shook his purpose more than he was willing to confess to himself.

But it did not finally prevent the consummation of his intended flight. The life of ease he had led, made him long for one of still greater luxury, and he fancied he was about to secure this by going north. Before the next morning the influence of Uncle Peter's words had, therefore, almost entirely departed. The following evening, when all the household was asleep, he stole out from the mansion, and began his journey.

Cora accompanied him, though reluctantly, and with tears; for her heart yearned to remain with her young mistress. But her husband, by describing the life before them in glowing colors, by telling her she would be torn from Isabel, and by appealing to her love for him, finally persuaded her to go.

Yet as the mansion disappeared behind them, in the shadows of night, she felt like Eve when our first mother left Paradise for ever.

CHAPTER V.

THE HOUSEHOLD WRECK.

THE forebodings of the doctor proved entirely correct. The inventory of the property of the deceased Mr. Courtenay scarcely amounted to a sum sufficient to discharge his debts.

The sale of his various effects took place within the shortest period allowed by the law, for the result being inevitable, Isabel wished to have the affair closed as soon as possible. We say Isabel, because Mrs. Courtenay, as Dr. Worthington had foreseen, proved totally unfit to counsel, much less to act in this emergency. All she could do was to wring her hands; lament for herself and children; or tell the doctor that she had never expected to live to see such a day.

Her health, indeed, was now completely broken down. The death of her husband, followed by this terrible misfortune, working on a constitution naturally delicate,

had reduced her to a low, nervous condition, which rendered her utterly helpless, and made Isabel's future look gloomier still. But the noble girl bore up against all. Many a secret hour of weeping she had, indeed; but in the presence of her mother she was always calm. Her fortitude was the admiration of the doctor and his wife. The warm-hearted physician could, sometimes, scarcely restrain his tears, when he spoke of her.

"So young, beautiful and accomplished; apparently, too, born to such high destinies; yet now forced to sink into the condition of a common drudge, and wear out life that she may live. Oh! I know something of such a destiny myself, for I have been poor, and am not yet rich. It is hard enough for a man. But for a woman, good God, what a fate! And especially here in the South! If she only had some relations, to whom she might justly appeal. But there isn't one left in all Virginia. How these old families do die out. But there's nine o'clock," he cried, suddenly springing up, "and I must be off to see my patients. Isn't it provoking, Molly, that just now when I want so much time for these poor Courtenays, so many people have taken it into their heads get the fever?"

The proceeds of the sale realized something more than had been expected. This was because there was considerable competition among some of the wealthier neighbors, for the Courtenay mansion. The widow thought it strange that none of those people, who were so eager to possess themselves of her former home, exhibited the slightest desire to call upon her. In fact, it was just those persons who avoided the ruined family. The sympathy, which was so freely

offered, came from persons, like the Worthingtons, who were only in moderate circumstances, and who, from having seen trouble themselves, could feel for it in others.

The slaves, as Uncle Peter had predicted, were all purchased to remain in the vicinity. Even among those planters, who showed little concern for the ruined Courtenays, there was a sentiment of honor on this point, which operated in favor of the servants. A trader, who made his appearance at the sale, was hustled rather rudely by one or two present, so that, after making a few ineffectual bids, he thought it most prudent to retire. Uncle Peter, Aunt Vi'let, and the two children, were purchased by a Mr. Clifford, a planter in moderate circumstances, who lived a short distance from the village of ———, and had long desired just such a servant to assist him in the management of the farm.

The flight of Charles proved, in the end, a serious loss. The doctor, who was indignant at the ingratitude of the favorite, would have had him and Cora pursued; but this Isabel begged him not to do. She was herself deeply pained at Cora's conduct, for she was ignorant how reluctant the poor girl had been; but still no feeling of revenge lurked in her bosom, no desire to force an unwilling servant to return.

"There," said the doctor, when the sale being over, and all the claims paid, there remained a miserable hundred dollars, which he proceeded to hand over to Isabel, "there is your mother's dowry, and the entire fortune of you three children." He spoke bitterly. "But, in part, it is your own fault, miss. Had you allowed me to pursue that scape-grace, I should have caught him, for he did not get out of

the state, as I have certain information, for several days. He and his wife would have brought a pretty sum, let me tell you: General Randolph wanted both. Or you could have hired them out, for you would not have sold them unless compelled to, Charles for a waiter at the hotel in ———, where they want such a fellow badly, and Cora for a dress-maker, in the same place, where she would have earned you a little fortune."

"I don't regret my decision," said Isabel. "If they prefer deserting me, to sharing my poverty, let them go. I did every thing for Cora when I was rich. I can do nothing now." And the tears started to her eyes, for the ingratitude pained her inexpressibly.

"The devil go with them," broke forth from the doctor's lips. "It's the way of the world, however, my poor young friend."

"I know it," said Isabel, chokingly. "I must expect some of it."

And yet, though she thus nerved herself to speak brave words before the doctor as well as her mother, her heart often sank within her as the realities of her situation forced themselves on her. A day or two before the sale, the Courtenays had removed to the doctor's house, where they were now staying. But Isabel knew that, though this might do for awhile, the doctor's means could not afford a continuance of it. Neither would her own sense of right allow her to become, with her family, a pensioner on the excellent man's bounty. Yet, when she looked around to see what she could do, she found so gloomy a prospect, that any heart, cast in a less firm mould, would have given up in despair.

A school seemed to her still the only feasible plan.

She had thought of being a governess, but she could not leave her mother. Yet where should she find a school? After waiting for several weeks, and making enquiries in every direction, she determined to cut the Gordian knot by establishing one of her own.

The village of ———, about twelve miles from the doctor's house, had no school for younger children, though an old school-house existed near the place, which had formerly been occupied. There were, however, quite a number of white families in and about the place, whose circumstances did not allow them to have tutors, or governesses, yet who were unwilling that their children should be without the advantages of private instruction. The doctor, in the course of his professional visits, made himself acquainted with these facts, and, when he found Isabel bent on her purpose, suggested that she should rent the school-house, and open an academy.

The offer was cheerfully accepted. The doctor however circulated a subscription paper, and obtained enough names to warrant the undertaking, before he would allow Isabel to rent the old school-house or remove from his roof. But when sufficient pupils were secured, he procured a small dwelling in ———, which Isabel fitted up with a few articles of furniture, that had been saved from the general wreck. The establishment was on the most economical scale. The prospective profits of the school were very small, indeed the doctor declared roundly no family could live on them; and though the hundred dollars was still untouched, all felt the wisdom of saving that for sickness, or other similar contingency.

During these transactions, Mrs. Courtenay remained comparatively passive. When, indeed, Isabel first an-

nounced her intention to open a school, the fond, but weak mother protested that she could never agree to it; that it would disgrace her daughter forever; that she might as well die at once as submit to such a degradation. For Mrs. Courtenay had been brought up with all the old prejudices against labor, especially on the part of women. It was fortunate that the interview took place when they were alone. But Isabel, foreseeing what her mother's feeling would be, had taken care of this. At last, by dint of reasoning, Isabel convinced her parent that something must be done, and that the scheme of a school was really the only feasible one that offered at present.

"Well," said Mrs. Courtenay, "if it must be, it must; but I'm sure it all seems very strange to me, and very cruel. As you say it may be only for a little while that you will have to teach school. Surely something will turn up. Mr. Noble will soon return, I know, and marry you. He was desperately in love with you, or I'm mistaken, and so was your poor father, for we talked the matter over. It's very queer he didn't propose. But, I suppose, that his delicacy kept him silent, after our terrible loss in your dear father's death," and here Mrs. Courtenay burst into an agony of tears.

Alas! Isabel could afford herself no such consolation. Her heart told her that she should never see her faithless lover again. With her poverty had fled the false love of the calculating suitor. For, if otherwise, why had he not flown to her? Why had he not written at least? If a tithe of his warm protes ations, she reasoned, had been true, he would have been at her side the moment he heard of her misfortune. And of this he could not be ignorant,

for, on leaving Courtenay Hall, the night of her father's death, he had gone to ———, where he had remained until after the execution and inventory, and then had suddenly disappeared. All this Isabel knew, though her mother did not.

Perhaps if Isabel had been still rich, and free from other sorrows, this defection of her lover would have pained her more. But it was a terrible blow to her, notwithstanding all, how terrible those only know who have been deceived in a similar manner.

Of all her family, her young brother, Horace, a lad of thirteen, was the sole one to whom Isabel felt she could look for true sympathy. In many respects the boy resembled herself. He had the same high and courageous soul. From the first hour that he had realized their true condition, he had been planning, in his own mind, what he could do to assist his sister; and, at last, he formed his resolution.

One morning the doctor was aroused from a revery in his big arm chair, by a tap at the door, and on opening it he exclaimed,

"Well, Horace, my boy, what can I do for you?—which way this morning? gun, horse, or worm, eh?"

"Neither, thank you, doctor; but I want to speak to you for a few moments, if you are not too much engaged."

"I was quite busy when you came in—dreaming. But drive ahead, my fine fellow,—it's terribly healthy about here again."

Horace looked important, yet stammered as he said,

"I wanted to see if you could in any way get some employment for me, doctor. I must do something, but I didn't know what."

"The mischief!" exclaimed the doctor, "what are

you fit for, you picaninnie? You are rather small for an overseer, I should think;—you can't translate Euripides well enough to be a tutor;—and I'll be d——d if I let you turn doctor!"

Horace laughed at the good man's vehemence, as he answered,

"I didn't think of any of these things, doctor, but I knew you had a good many friends at the North, and thought perhaps if it was not too much trouble, you would write and see if you couldn't get me a situation there."

"Fiddle-de-dee, youngster, on the trouble! I'll do it for you to be sure; I like your independence, but mind, I warn you before-hand, that you'll be starved to death on the salary you'll get."

"Thank you, dear doctor; but I must encroach again on your kindness, to get you to persuade mamma to let me go," and the boy's countenance grew thoughtful.

The next person to be spoken to, was his sister. Horace instinctively knew of whom he was to seek the most support.

Isabel was sitting on the piazza with her work-box, putting together a widow's cap for her mother, for this English custom was still retained in the family.

She looked up, and sighed as her young brother appeared, while he, boy-like, gave a kick to a spool of cotton which had rolled on the floor, and then as he chased it to recover it, said, diving at once into the subject,

"Bella dear, doctor Worthington has promised to try to get a situation for me! I want to do something for myself."

"You!" exclaimed the sister in astonishment, "what can you do, Horace? It is not so easy for gentlemen's sons to earn their own living in Virginia."

"As easy as for gentlemen's daughters to do it," was the retort.

"But you are so young, Horace,—what are you fit for?"

Now his age was a tender point with the boy. He constantly felt as Copperfield did, under the eyes of his friend's penetrating, deferential serving man. So he answered somewhat shortly,

"I can turn runner, or errand-boy, in somebody's store,—I suppose I'm old enough for that."

Isabel sighed. She saw the worldly prudence of the act, for to have one mouth less to feed was something. But her heart sank to think of parting with this, the only one in all the family who could understand her.

"I'm afraid, my dear brother," she said at last, "that mamma would never consent; and besides, the salary you would get would be so trifling, that—"

"As to mamma's consent," interrupted the boy, "I'm afraid I shall have to go without it then, for it is very clear, that if I can't do any thing toward supporting you all, I can do something toward supporting myself; and as to your school scheme, Isabel, I'm sure it won't make you rich enough to feed such a hungry mouth as mine."

The sister, after some reflection, and some additional secret pangs, promised to use her influence in obtaining her mother's consent.

"I have no doubt but that mamma will refuse to let me go, without she knows the thing to be inevitable. So, Belle, I think we had better say nothing to

her about it, till Doctor Worthington hears positively if there is any chance for me."

"No, no, Horace," was the sister's answer. "You are not old enough to throw off mamma's authority so suddenly. It is a piece of respect that is due to her, to consult her in this case. I doubt not, but that her affection for you will make her refuse at first, but I think she will see the wisdom of consenting in the end."

But Mrs. Courtenay was not so easily persuaded.

"What! give up college?" said she, when the subject was broached, "it is not to be thought of, for a moment."

"But mamma, we have no means of defraying Horace's college expenses now,—you surely do not think of that," replied the daughter.

"That's true; I fear he cannot enter college; but I will never consent to his going North."

Horace till now had said nothing, but was inwardly fretting and chafing under his mother's objections.

"But, mamma," cried he, "what is to be done? You're too sick to work, and we oughtn't to let you do it, if you could: and I'm sure Isabel will have as much as she can do to support the rest, without me."

"I really don't see what is to be done; but it's no use talking, for I won't let you go North, my child, if *I* can prevent it."

Horace's irritation, for the moment, made him forget his respect for his mother, and he replied,

"Well, I know what'll be done then, I shall starve! As to letting Isabel work *for me*, I won't do it."

"Horace, my son, how you distress me!" And the tears gushed into the speaker's eyes. "I am not able to bear it, indeed I aint. Do try to rest more

quietly under this dispensation. This murmuring and fretting against the decrees of Providence is not right."

Horace was subdued, at least partially. He would not remain to continue the discussion, lest he should forget himself again, but left the room. Yet as he went he muttered to himself, "that the dispensations of men were harder to bear, than those of Providence."

His love for his mother, and the natural chivalry in the boy's nature, made him soon repent even this unkind thought, so he returned after awhile, and kissed the pale cheek of his parent, saying,

"Well, mamma, I hope you'll think better of this."

But it took a long while for Mrs. Courtenay to think better of it. The doctor said he would take the risk of the mother's approval in the end; so he had written, and a favorable answer had been received before Mrs. Courtenay yielded.

How her sighs, and tears, and lamentations distressed her young son. In despite the anticipated parting from his family, the boy looked forward to the project with pleasure. He was eager to sweep over the world's battle field, with his untried wings; he had such confidence in his youth, and health, and unflagging energies.

The day of parting at length came. Horace wandered restlessly about the house; and Isabel kept her mother's attention on the arranging and packing of his clothes, as much as possible.

"Horace, my child, I cannot let you go," sobbed the poor woman on her son's shoulder.

"But, mother, you know it is nothing in these steaming days. One can fly from North to South in no

time. But I shan't visit you often either, for it will take too much of the dear silver from my pocket, and you will appreciate me more when I do come."

"Come as often as you can get away, no matter about the cost. I must see you, or I can't live."

"Well, well—in a year, I hope. But plenty of letters before then, you know."

"And do try, my son, to select companions worthy of your birth. Never forget who you are, Horace," and at the thought of the dark future, and her poor boy struggling unhelped, through the temptations of a great city, the mother's fortitude again gave way.

At length the carriage was announced, that was to convey Horace to the nearest coach route; and after Isabel, with tearless eyes, but trembling lips, had pressed her brother's forehead, Mrs. Courtenay arose, and laying her thin white hands on the boy's head, said, solemnly,

"May the God of the fatherless guide thee, and protect thee, my dear, dear son." Then she fell back in a swoon.

Isabel hurried her brother away, before her mother's recovery, thinking it better that the parting should not be repeated.

CHAPTER VI.

THE SCHOOL.

THE school-house was at least half a mile from the village, but pleasantly situated in a grove of large

oaks, with a green sward sloping off to a little stream, about a hundred feet distant.

The house, to be sure, was rude and weather-stained, and the inside did not belie the outward appearance. It had evidently been a long while since the walls had made acquaintance with brush and lime, or the window-panes had tasted of water, except as the generous rain supplied it.

The forms were clumsy, hacked, and ink-stained. The crooked, rusty stove, which kept its place winter and summer, stood on three feet, whilst a wooden block and a pile of bricks, supplied the place of a fourth. The floor was a mosaic work of mud and ink, whilst of the books which lay strewn around, some were guiltless of covers, or title pages; spelling-books made a long jump from "ba-ker" to "White-holmes-dale;" while an "Introduction," with one blue cover, commenced with "Youths and maids, whence did she come," and ended with the touching story of Barbara Lathwait.

Isabel surveyed her little kingdom with dismay, and her subjects certainly did not tend to quiet her fears.

Tall, awkward girls, with bare feet, unwashed faces and "unkempt hair," stared, whispered, and jostled each other; little ones stood with gingerbread in their hands, and fingers in their mouths; while the boys sprung in at the windows, jumped over each other's shoulders, and whooped like young savages.

Isabel grew sick at heart. "Can I ever reduce this confusion to order," thought she, and for a moment the wild idea of relinquishing the situation, flitted across her mind.

But for a moment only. For there arose the images of that frail, helpless mother, and that laughing, golden-

haired baby-brother, to urge her onward; besides a certain something in her own strong nature, just called forth, which incited her to grapple with difficulties and overcome them. So, with a mental "God help me in this," Isabel felt strong again.

To the astonishment of the children, one of those who lived nearest was despatched to her home for buckets and cloths, brushes and soap, while others were set to arranging books and clearing litter from the desks; and the boys dispersed some of their superabundant energy, by carrying away a few boards and rails, which disfigured the pretty little lawn.

Isabel set the example in all this, by working heartily herself. The strife soon grew vigorous to see who would accomplish the most work in the best manner; and when, by sun-down, the school-house wore a brighter aspect than usual, still old and worn, 'tis true, but neat and clean, many a little heart throbbed, many a bright eye beamed with pleasure, as the possessor reflected how much individually she had contributed to this result.

On their return to their homes that night, the children told their parents that the teacher had given them no lessons that day, little thinking with how valuable a one she had already commenced, by imparting the germ of habits of neatness, self-respect, and the pleasure of being useful.

And now, day after day, through chilly dews and scorching sun, Isabel wended her way to the school house, often with laggard step and drooping spirit, sometimes with loathing, but yet again with all the energy of youth and hope, and the interest she really felt in the progress of her wild pupils.

Sometimes the rudeness and stupidity, or carelessness

of some of the children, would make her heart faint with despair, to be revived again by a well said lesson, an intelligent answer, or a loving caress from some sun-burnt one.

Poor Isabel! her pleasures must have been few, indeed, for her to have derived so much as she did, from the improved bearing of the children. But a constant source of enjoyment to her, were the oak trees around the school house. Their green tongues babbled continually of pleasant things; they whispered mysterious words of sweet, wild music in a far away land, that should lull the weary-hearted to rest; they passed their cool, light fingers over her throbbing brow, and with soft breath fanned away the fever heat from her worn spirit.

And the little stream, too, grew strangely companionable. It was the first to dance forth to meet her, with its bright face and musical voice, in the morning; it was the last to throw a gay glance back to her, in the warm sunset, as she returned to her home in the evening; it murmured, and laughed, and prattled to itself beneath the dark pines and green oaks at the noon-time; and it gave back in liquid music the light foot-fall of the pattering rain-drops, during the summer shower.

But the terrible responsibility and anxiety of mind; the unwonted bodily exertion; and the long walks over green fields wet with dew, soon told on Isabel's naturally fine constitution.

Mrs. Courtenay observed this at length, and redoubled her motherly attentions and murmurs at the same time.

"Oh dear me!" exclaimed she one morning, when Isabel's delicate palate refused a second cup of weak tea, "it is too bad, my dear child, that you have nothing that you can eat. If we had only a little white sugar, instead of this brown stuff, I know you could drink another

cup. You must require it, I am sure, for you have such a fatiguing time at that school, dragging all day long." And Mrs. Courtenay gave a sigh to whole barrels of white sugar.

"Indeed, mother, I want nothing at all. Peacock's brains, the Roman epicure's favorite dish, could not tempt me now."

"Ah me!" again sighed Mrs. Courtenay, "you will have to give up that school, Isabel, it is killing you."

"I am very much afraid we should die without it, mother mine," was the reply, in a cheerful voice. "Bread and butter, and even weak tea, with brown sugar, would not drop down like the manna in the Wilderness, without some effort on our part."

Well, my dear, I have great faith that we should be provided for. If you will give up the school, I will be willing to sacrifice my feelings, and part with one of my diamond rings. It *would* be a great sacrifice, for those few articles of jewelry are the only wrecks left of happier days. But rather than see you die by inches, I would do it cheerfully."

"Do not part with them, mamma," said the daughter with a tearful voice, "for the dear sake of him who gave them to you. And besides that, the proceeds would go but a small way toward maintaining a family for any length of time."

Isabel arose from the table to attend to the household duties, which to a very great extent also devolved upon her. It was nearly as trying to her as the school-teaching. Educated in almost total ignorance of homely domestic affairs, the poor girl was at first pitiably inefficient in the most simple household requirements. Mrs. Courtenay declared at once that she who had never taken

a handkerchief from a drawer, nor laced a gaiter herself, could know nothing, and do nothing in the emergency.

Aunt Vi'let, who, with Uncle Peter, had been bought, as we have seen, by a planter in the neighborhood, was hired out by her master, to Isabel, occasionally to help with the heaviest part of the work; and she gave her "poor young missis," as she still called her, many valuable hints, besides crowding into one day the work of two or three.

When all had been prepared for her mother's simple dinner, Isabel took her bonnet to go to school, much to the surprise of little Alfred, who wondered why his sister had not made the bobs for his blue blotting-paper kite, as she had promised.

But Isabel felt too ill now to think even of her little pet brother. With aching head and wearied heart she proceeded to the day's duties. The pain in her temples was very terrible. Now the earth seemed to recede immeasurably from her, then to roll up again in round billows, till she put her hands out to push it away. The green grass assumed a hue of sickly yellow, while the bright dew drops seemed to her excited nerves, to be balls of fire burning into her very brain.

She reached the school, she knew not how. Glad young voices welcomed her, and the usual offerings of fruit, flowers, or odd bits of moss, strewed her desk.

Ruth Elliott, a little blue-eyed favorite, went shyly up to present her a boquet of prince's feather, sweet fern, fox-glove, and wood-lilies, for which she had levied Black Mail on wood and stream, on her way to school. As Isabel stooped to receive the accustomed kiss, the child exclaimed,

"My, how hot you are, Miss Isabel, you're sick, ain't you?"

This was the signal for expressions of regret and pity from some, and of whispers of a probable holyday from others less kind-hearted.

And now the tasks of the day commenced. One of the elder and more intelligent girls was selected by the sick teacher to assist her, and as if some slight responsibility had been taken from her, Isabel leaned her aching head on the desk, with a sigh of relief, and went through her part with the precision of an automaton.

Little Tommy, with his *ab abs*, had been dismissed, and another sun-burned juvenile with an illustrated primer was called to the desk.

Isabel never raised her head. In fact, the pain had become so great, she could scarcely distinguish one sound from another. All was like the confused, sullen murmur of the sea.

The hero of the primer got along bravely, when left to his own pilotage. A slight mistake was made now and then, to be sure, by his thinking more of the pictures than the letters, such as spelling *c-a-t*, and calling it "pussy," or *c-o-w*—"old Sal," that being the name of the only representative of the horned creation possessed by the urchin's parents.

This last mistake caused too audible a titter for Isabel, even sick as she was, not to notice it. The boy was dismissed to his seat, and again she endeavored to give her attention to her duties.

But it was useless. As recitation after recitation was dismissed, they left on her mind only wild and confused ideas of the subjects they had been about. Geography and history were jumbled strangely together in a half delirious dream. It seemed as if the Polar Sea and the Gulf of Mexico were mingling their waters

lovingly together, or as if America had been freed by the superhuman efforts of the emperor of China.

The delegated authority of the young girl, whom Isabel had selected to assist her, was totally defied, and when her head sunk, for the second time on the desk, the confusion redoubled.

Paper-balls flew across the room like a miniature hail storm; and a piece of charred wood, found in the stove, painted whiskers and moustachios, on cheeks and lips that would not know a razor for a dozen years. One imp of mischief roamed around the room, on tip-toe, stooping now and then under a form to give its possessor a pull or a pinch, or to tickle, with a feather, the ears and neck of some studious little girl.

The morning session was at length over, and the young rebels were dismissed, with a caution not to make a noise too near the house.

The girls betook themselves to their play-houses, divided from each other by rails, or rows of fern bushes, and rich in broken china and pennyroyal tea; while the boys built mills and sailed ships on the little stream.

Isabel's head was again on the desk, buried in her clasped hands. She felt that it would have been a relief to have pressed the throbbing temples in. The large lids drooped over the aching balls with a weight which slumber never knew.

Every sense was fearfully sharpened. The aromatic perfume of the fern, in little Ruth's gorgeous boquet, sent a shivering sickness through her whole frame; the twittering of a bird on an oak bough, by the window, pierced her brain like lightning flashes; the green trees which before had babbled so pleasantly in the sunshine, now bent and swayed, and grew clamorous

in the breeze; and the humming of the honey-bee, returning from fields of bending clover, and even the light flutter of the gaily painted butterflies' wings, became audible, and almost maddened her.

The bowed head, with its weight of magnificent black hair, now tossed restlessly from side to side.

Oh! how Isabel longed for the cool quiet of the dark grave. But the parched lips framed no words. Only the wearied spirit yearned with unspeakable yearning for rest, rest. Annihilation had more charms for her just then, than the glories of heaven. Mother, brothers, false lover were all forgotten.

The children thought their play-hour unusually long. At last a little girl ventured into the room, on tip-toe, for another slice of bread and butter, and Isabel, rousing from an uneasy slumber into which she had fallen, told the child to dismiss the school, as she was too ill for an afternoon session.

Little Ruth was on her way homeward when, as she passed Mr. Clifford's farm, she espied Uncle Peter, who was known to the whole neighborhood, about putting the harness on his horse, preparatory to hitching him to a board farm wagon, or rather box.

"Where are you going, Uncle Peter?" asked the child.

"Dat you, honey?" was the response.

Now, Uncle Peter was the favorite of all the children around, and Ruth, particularly, was on quite familiar terms with the old man.

"Won't you give me a ride, Uncle Peter?" she asked.

"Why, what's in de wind now, chinckapin? I tot you went to school to young missus up dar."

"Miss Isabel's sick, so we've got holyday. It's no

LITTLE RUTH MEETING UNCLE PETER.

matter about my going home yet. So won't you give me a ride, Uncle Peter?"

"She sick, eh? Wha' de matter? Cotched de cholery, hab she?" and Uncle Peter's eyes almost started out of his head, for to him there seemed but two evils under the sun, being parted from his master's family, and having the cholera.

"I don't know what's the matter," answered Ruth, "she laid her head on the desk all the morning, and had to get Maggie Welch to help hear the lessons.'

"Poor young ting! Dis 's jist killing her dead down. Stand still dar, now, yer Jerry, can't yer?" he said, addressing the horse. "Did missis go home, honey? Now won't yer stand, eh?" and Uncle Peter took up the heavy lines, and gave poor Jerry a crack that made him more restless than ever.

"Now, how yer like dat?" continued he. "Did she go home, honey?" he asked of Ruth again, who in a pout, because she saw no prospect of a ride, had not answered the question before.

"I don't know any thing about it. She was laying with her head on the desk when we come away," was the child's reply, as she stood wishfully watching Uncle Peter's operations, and burying her bare little feet in the sand.

"Well, I guess dat I'll stop at de school-house and see, an' if she aint gone I kin tote her home, as I go to de village," said the slave. As he spoke, he lifted the board from the bottom of the wagon, to place across the top, in order to form a seat.

This was too much for Ruth. Another appeal must be made.

"Oh! Uncle Peter, you said you would take me to the village some time with you," she said, looking up

imploringly. "Won't you take me to-day? Please do I won't plague you."

"Well, chile, jump in, and let's be off, for dis ole horse is about de slowest animal I knows of," and uncle Peter, who had mounted both Ruth and himself in the meantime, gave Jerry a jerk with the lines, and started.

"It's berry well I didn't let dat ole woman put de chickens in de wagon to day, for Miss Isabel see em, den sartain sure. I tink she's most mad about it too, but Vi'let's a mighty high tempered nigger sometimes," soliloquised the old man.

When they reached the school-house, Ruth jumped out, and went to seek Miss Courtenay. She found all the shutters closed, and Isabel with her head still on the desk, but with her bonnet and parasol in her hand, as if even that slight effort toward going home had been too much for her.

"Miss Isabel, Miss Isabel, uncle Peter's come to take you home," said Ruth, shaking her arm. "The wagon's at the door waiting, and I'm going too," she continued rather excitedly, for riding to the village was something of an event in little Ruth's life.

Isabel rose languidly. She hardly understood what Ruth said, except that something was there to take her home, and she gladly availed herself of the offer. When she approached the wagon, she found the faithful black, sitting with his elbows on his knees, snapping the reins on the horse's back to keep the flies off. But the moment he saw his "young missis," he was out of the wagon, and stood with his tattered hat in hand, ready to bow her in, with as much respect as ever the old coachman, Mark Antony, did into the softly lined carriage of other days.

"Ruth said yer right down sick, missis, to-day," was his greeting, in an affectionate voice.

"I am glad to see you, Uncle Peter," she said, deeply touched to think that now her best friend was this poor slave, and she stopped, looking in vain for a way to mount into her airy seat. Uncle Peter saw her perplexity.

"Step on dat ar spoke of dat fore wheel, missis," he said, "an' gib me yer hand, den yer can just spring in like a bird."

Isabel gave her hand as directed, but to spring was an impossibility, so her self-elected coachman pushed and lifted, till she was fairly in.

"Dem narves 's bad tings, missis, I heard say; dey's what ole missis used to hab, aint dey?"

"A little sleep will help me, I hope, Uncle Peter. I am better now than I was this morning, for I got a short nap at noon."

Uncle Peter sighed, snapped the reins on Jerry, and in his emotion came near tumbling out of the wagon, for he never sat down after Isabel got in.

"Poor young missis, dis hard work for yer, killing yer rite down dead. I'd go to Georgy or Lousy-anna to work in de cane brake, if it 'd help yer, 'deed I would," he added earnestly, the tears coming into his honest eyes. Then after a pause, he added, "How ole missis and de baby come on?"

With similar enquiries, Uncle Peter kept up a running fire of respectful questions and comments, till they arrived in the village, for he thought that politeness demanded he should entertain his guest.

Mrs. Courtenay turned pale with alarm, when she saw her daughter's haggard face, and at that early hour too.

"Isabel, what *is* the matter?" she cried, "what has happened?"

"Nothing, dear mother, except a bad nervous headache."

"My poor, dear child! What can I do for you? You must take something."

"Rest will be of more benefit than any thing else," replied the daughter. "I shall be perfectly well after a few hours sleep."

But Mrs. Courtenay was not satisfied unless she was actively employed. Quietly benefiting a person was beyond her comprehension. So she opened wide the shutters of Isabel's little room, and let the hot sunshine come pouring in; then, at a gentle remonstrance from her daughter, she closed them so tight that she excluded the air altogether.

Isabel, at length, could bear it no longer. In her nervous agony her mother's very presence irritated her.

"Dear mother," she said, "I think if every thing was quiet, I could get to sleep. Won't you take Alfred a walking or keep him out of doors for a while?"

That would be doing something, so Mrs. Courtenay gladly acceded to the request.

The next morning, when Mrs. Courtenay went down stairs, she found Isabel's bonnet and parasol on the little table.

"Why, my child," exclaimed she, in surprise, "you don't think of going to that dreadful school again today!"

"To be sure, mother, there is no help for it."

"You must not, and shall not go. I never was willing you should undertake so drudging an affair, and

the compensation is so pitiable that it scarcely affords us the most common necessaries. You are slaving your very life away for a mess of pottage."

"I assure you, mother, it is not such a dreadful life, after all. I am quite interested in it sometimes. Besides, small as the remuneration is, we cannot live without it."

"I feel that we will be provided for," was again the reply, for Mrs. Courtenay had "faith without works" to a wonderful extent.

A sad smile passed over Isabel's sad face as she answered,

"I have always noticed that those are *best* provided for who endeavor to help themselves."

"My child there is no use arguing about it, you must not go back to that school. To be candid, too, I think your duty lies as much at home; for Alfred is very troublesome, and it is really more than my health will stand, to run after him, as I have to do. He has been so accustomed to have Cato or 'Cretia at his heels, to pick him up or amuse him, that it has made him terribly selfish."

Poor Isabel's heart sunk at this. Her trials seemed to come upon her so fast; and her mother was so utterly unconscious of what she was heaping on her already overburdened daughter.

"I will relieve you of that trouble as much as possible, dear mother," she said at last, "for when the weather is pleasant, I can take Alfred to school with me. He will not be much care among so many children, for they will amuse him."

"Well, my child, do as you like, but you must give up this school, and find something less fatiguing and

more lucrative. I am sure there must be something that would suit you better."

Isabel put on her bonnet, and after kissing her mother, took little Alfred by the hand and proceeded toward the school, with a brain nearly stupified by the pain of yesterday, and a heart that sank as she looked into the dreary future.

Mrs. Courtenay seated herself in her chair, and rocked and sighed, and sighed and rocked, till she was perfectly convinced there was never so miserable a woman as herself in the world.

With murmurs and remonstrances from her mother, and increasing ill-health, which seemed to take all the life from her energies, Isabel had to contend, day after day, till she was sometimes tempted to pray for death.

CHAPTER VII.

THE HARVEST HOLIDAY.

Uncle Peter and Aunt Vi'let had not been the only servants of the late Mr. Courtenay, whom Mr. Clifford had purchased. Having just bought a farm, which had been allowed to run to waste, and being determined to recover it by thorough agriculture, Mr. Clifford happened to require, at this particular time, a large number of field-laborers, and accordingly had bought most of the former slaves of Mr. Courtenay.

Mr. Clifford was what some would call a hard master. His motto was, "feed your servants well, lodge them well, take care of them well when sick, but work them

well also." Accordingly whoever was indolent, whoever sought to escape hearty labor, found that Mr. Clifford was not to be trifled with.

"Look here, boys," was the speech he made to them, the first morning they were summoned to the field, "I like fair play, and intend to both give and have it. I'm not going to keep any lazy, good-for-nothing niggers on my farm. Every one of you has got to work, during work hours, heartily and thoroughly. If you're sick you shall be excused. But if you're well, you must work with a will. In return, when the task is over, your time shall be your own. Every cabin, as you see, has its garden, where, after my work is done, you may work for yourself; and you'll find a good market in the village, if you've any thing to sell. So now we understand each other."

The remarks of the servants, as they wended their way a-field, after this speech, were various and characteristic.

"'Spec some of yer lazy niggers will git now what yer long desarved," said Tony, who, on Mr. Courtenay's plantation, had been second in influence only to Uncle Peter, chiefly, perhaps, because he played the fiddle, and was a greater master of pompous language, that highest ambition of the Southern slave. "Massa Clifford's a gwine to be arter some o' yer. Ketch dis chile playin' possum dese times."

"Ah!" sighed an old fellow, who had been proverbially lazy, standing shifting his hoe from one shoulder to the other, "dese *is* hard times for poor niggers."

"Hard, eh!" said Tony, with a grin. "I 'specs dey is for niggers like yer, Uncle Alex. Yer can't go ter sleep, ole chile, over de hoe now, nor 'tend yer

hab de rheumatiz, nor 'spepsie. Massa Clifford's eye sezs, plain as eber eye did, dat de niggers dat 'specs to confusticate him, mus' be smarter dan eber yer was, or will be ter de fift' generation. Took dis chile to do dat at de ole place. But dis no Massa Courtenay, an' so I say to myself, 'Tony, no possum here, or yer'll repentate it, nigger, dat yer will.' Imitate de example of yer betters, Uncle Alex, an' show ter de 'dmirin' population of dis 'abitable an' circumambient globe, dat yer is an honest man, an' no low, black nigger."

Though the servants found that Mr. Clifford was not the easy, careless master that Mr. Courtenay had been; though they discovered that they were now held tight in hand, whereas formerly they had scarcely been under discipline at all; it was soon evident that their new owner was almost, if not quite, as much liked as their old one. A negro, in fact, respects a master none the less, on whom he finds he cannot impose. After a little grumbling on their part, and a good deal of laughter at them by the others, the indolent threw aside their old habits, and did, in the end, as fair a day's work as the rest.

When the early crop had been got in, Mr. Clifford gave his servants a grand festival, for he was one of those men who always exceeded his word. The entertainment was the more welcome because entirely unexpected. Tony was in his glory on this occasion. Mounted on a barrel, violin in hand, he led the revels, as important a master of ceremonies as ever inducted a masque at the magnificent court of the first Charles.

"Niggers," he said pompously, as he rosined his bow, "look he'yar. Dis is de chile ter show yer how ter dance, by giving yer de real sumptuosity ob music,

sich as dat great massa of de art, Morpheus larned um—"

"Hi, who dat?" The interruption was from a merry negro, who sometimes ventured a passage of wit with Tony. "Who' dat, Tony!"

With what a grand air, Tony turned and looked down upon the speaker, as Jove might be supposed to do on some offender whom he pitied, while he annihilated.

"Yer fool," he said at last, the speaker shrinking under his eye, "what's an ignorant bedighted nigger like yer 'spected to know of de great principles of art, or de facs of matutinal biography?"

The discomfiture of the offender was complete. He sneaked, crest-fallen, into the rear, amid the jeers of some and the awe of others.

Tony went on.

"I tell yer, niggers," he said, "I'se de chile for yer, an' yer oughter be grateful dat yer lib in de light of sich blessed selvidges. Whar's de nigger can play wid Tony? Whar's de artist dat knows de grand harmonics like me? Or can gib de last novelties of de fashionable world, from de gran' poke, to de tender delisuosities of Lucy Neal? But yer don't comprehend dese tings 't all, niggers," he continued, as he finished rosining. "De simplicities of yer degraded 'ditions allers forbids yer risin' ter de sorin' heights of poetry and der spheres. Yer sees 'em is so. 'Spec dat nigger dat interrupted dis chile, 'magined he could fly ter 'em, like de glorious bird of freedom; but yer seed how his wings gub out, an' how he cum ker-souse inter der mud, jist as a young crow does."

With these words he gave a short prelude, as if to

try the temper of his violin, and then, as he proceeded to tighten a string, resumed.

"I telled yer, yer disremember, dat if yer did yer duty, yer'd find dis Massa Clifford ter be one ob de rite sort. Yer sees I cognosticated for yer de future eventuosities," Tony was going it superbly now, "of yer lot in dis yer vail of tears. I'se spectolated on de human physiology too profoundly, an' on de envelopments of de character in de eye, dat wonderful ting, niggers, not ter ha' seed dat massa Clifford's better dan his word, an' a fust rate superderogatory white man. Dat is de whole truff, an' what none of yer ebber could 'a investigated yerselfs, if yer hadn't me ter 'splain an' demonstrify it for yer. Now, niggers, spread yerselfs, for I'se gwine to begin."

No one, who is not familiar with the South, can fully realize how fond the negroes are of pompous declamation. Their vocabulary is the very reverse of what many Northern writers describe. Its peculiarity is not simplicity, but the reverse, and its ludicrousness consists in the incongruity with which sonorous words, frequently misplaced or mispronounced, are mixed up with ideas the most bald. Tony was a master of this art, and therefore in high favor.

Equally striking is a negro holiday. No race, either in civilized or uncivilized lands, appears to enjoy a holiday with the zest of the Southern negroes. They enter into it with an unctuousness that our elder and more correct Anglo-Saxon blood cannot comprehend. At all times they are a happier people than we are. Their merry faces show this. Yet, like every race in a rude state, their mirth finds its food as well as expression, in music that to more advanced races is almost mournful. All the Southern airs, which have really arisen with

the negro, are in the minor key. Even those tunes, which they have picked up from hearing them played in their master's parlors, and adopted for themselves, are of this description. And what is true of this race in the South, in this respect, is true of it every where. Travellers tell us that the music of the Ethiopians on the Nile is a monotonous repetition, in a minor key, that though often drawing tears to the listeners' eyes, appears to afford only mirthful enjoyment to the African himself.

Nevertheless, in their way, Mr. Clifford's servants had a more joyous time than was ever seen in higher circles. The first note of Tony's violin was greeted with a general shout of laughter, for, like the wit of whom Irving tells, his reputation was such that every body began to grin as soon as he commenced. The dancing would not have stood the conventional test of polished society. But untutored as it was, it was more graceful infinitely, as indeed are all movements that are not artificial. A group of children at play, or Southern servants excited by music, afford two equally incomparable pictures of melody in motion.

Refreshments had been provided, by Mr. Clifford, for all, whether dancers or spectators. As the former became heated, or the latter grew tired of looking on, they resorted in turn to the temporary bar, and here they drank, ate, laughed, and joked, till the grove, at the edge of which they had met, rang with the merriment. Occasionally, nay, frequently, Tony ceased playing, in order to quaff a brimming bowl brought to him by some admiring urchin, of whom at least a dozen stood, in permanent committee, at the side of the barrel, looking wonderingly up at the performer, ready, at the slightest intimation, to serve him in all

things, and thinking the act reflected on them a portion of his glory. Sometimes Tony descending majestically from his seat, made his way to the bar, where his presence commanded awe-struck silence, and where, like a Thibetan Lama, he condescended to taste in turn what half a score of eager hands offered.

But these respites were only preludes to renewed vigor at the violin. To have seen Tony, after having thus refreshed the inner man, and inhaled the incense of his admirers' adulation, would have made even the most sour-visaged misanthrope smile. The sense of his importance glowed in every pore of his face, shone from his eyes, grinned from his displayed teeth, quivered along his fiddle-bow, and found voice in the more pompous stamp of his feet as he kept time.

"Now fer someting bery fine, Tony," said one of the girls, a great beauty as beauty went there, "a real lively one. Cæsar an' I's gwine to be partners."

"De fair sex oughter be allers gratified," responded Tony, bowing low his superb head, which had naturally that ambrosial curl once considered so desirable. "What shall um be?" And he screwed up his fiddle.

"Any ting yer considerates 'propriate for der 'casion," replied the girl, in a strain of magniloquence almost as great as his own, at which Cæsar opened his eyes wide in admiration. "Yer taste am of de first order of harmonics."

"Git away dar, niggers, den," said Tony, "an' yer'll see der bery confection of playin', for I'se gwine ter spread mysel' for dis yer colo'r'd gal, deed I is."

Cæsar and Rosa went to work. The dance was a combination of all known figures and steps, a sort of *melange* picked up by the girl from observing the

quadrilles, waltzes, and polkas of her former mistress, and imitated, with great natural aptitude, by her partner. It was, to a considerable extent, improvised as she proceeded. Nothing, perhaps, in it was original; in this respect it exhibited the peculiarity of the girl's race; but the combinations were made with a fitness, a rapidity, and a grace that electrified the rude spectators, and would have extorted the admiration of even more polished critics. The applause was vociferous. And with the applause, the exertions of the dancers increased, Rosa trying, with every new burst, to outdo what she had achieved before. It was difficult to tell whether Tony entered most thoroughly into the spirit of the dance, or whether the quickness of the performers in catching the idea of the tune was rather to be admired. Tony changed the air continually, as if to put them at fault if possible, working with head, hands, feet, body, and countenance. The very soul of merriment seemed to transport the dancers, who labored, on their part, to tire out the musician. At last it came to a dead-heat between Tony and them. The fiddle dropped from his hands, and he simultaneously sank into the arms of his knot of supporters. Rosa, with a dive like a duck, disappeared among her sable sisters, while Cæsar, giving a vigorous somerset, sprang to his feet again with a whoop, and started off towards the refreshments, followed by all the males of the company, like a flock of wild black geese.

The grove was not so distant from Isabel's schoolhouse, but that she could hear the gleesome merriment. Though it was Saturday afternoon, she had been compelled to remain at the academy, having to set copies, and bring up other incidental things which, in the

hurry of school-hours, she had been forced to neglect. She stopped and listened, and then sighed.

"Happy beings," she said, mentally, "little did I think, when I deplored your future lot, that it would so soon be enviable compared with mine."

And, as if they had been spoken to her audibly, there came up to her mind the words of the parable, "How many hired servants of my father have bread enough and to spare, and I perish with hunger."

A rush of tears followed. She wept long and convulsively. But gradually the gust of emotion passed over. She prayed, and peace descending on her soul, she meekly resumed her task.

But all through the afternoon, and all the way back to her home, she heard the music rising and falling on the still July air, mingled with distant laughter.

CHAPTER VIII.

HORACE AT THE NORTH.

It was with bright and buoyant hopes that Horace, after a journey of three days, saw the spires of the city, which was to be his future home, rising before him.

With the sanguine confidence of youth, he already beheld fortune achieved. He had read of so many, who, like him, had started friendless boys, yet had finally won opulence and station, that he never, for a moment, doubted of success. The picture of Franklin, strolling through Philadelphia, with his rolls of bread under his

arm, and the picture of the same Franklin at Versailles, the idol of that brilliant circle, were continually arising before him. He thought, too, of another poor lad, going up to London to seek his fortune, and while he rested at a mile-stone, fancying he heard the distant chimes of the city repeat his name and proclaim him Lord Mayor.

Oh! beautiful morning of life, which ever projects across the future its own rosy hues, and has no foreshadowing of the wild winds and cold sleet which lie in the bright clouds it paints—how blessed a thing thou art, though but a transitory cheat. Could we but see, when we launch our barque on the bright jocund sea of life, with the fresh breezes filling our sails, the sparkling waters laughing along the shores, and playful birds careering around our prows, the wild tempest with which the evening is to close in, and the havoc to be made among our little fleet, could we behold the stark corpses, which, at night, will be cast upon the beach, wrapped in their slimy shrouds of sea-weed, with ominous birds of prey wheeling and screaming a requiem:—there is not one of us who would not draw back, if we might, nor venture out on that deceitful sea. But God mercifully conceals the dark future, nor gives us to taste, in anticipation, of the bitterness of death.

Full of high hopes was Horace, when he lay down, that first night of his arrival. The excitement of his mind prevented him, for a long time, from sleeping; and when at last he slumbered, it was only to dream half waking visions. He saw himself, in fancy, rapidly gaining the confidence of his employer. In a few months his salary was raised, so that he could remit more and more to his mother. Soon his gain became so large that Isabel was relieved from the necessity of teaching school.

A little longer, and the humble dwelling in ———, was exchanged for a more elegant one, adorned with shrubbery, and shaded by embowering trees. In time his employer admitted him into the firm, and then he bought back the old mansion, and afterwards the servants. His dreams were, in truth, but the repetition of the airy castles, which he had been building ever since he left Virginia. Generous boy, those visions, whether waking or sleeping, centred not around thyself, but around mother, sister, and baby brother! It was for them thou wouldst acquire fortune. Alas! and alas!

Horace woke, with a sigh, from these brilliant illusions to the stern realities of life. The day had dawned wet and chilly, a bleak north-east storm. Shivering, the little fellow set out, as soon as he had despatched his breakfast, to find the gentleman whom Dr. Worthington had interested in him, who proved to be a physician of note, one of the doctor's old class-mates. He was at home, finishing his morning meal. The physician agreed to accompany Horace at once to the store, where he had engaged a place for the lad; and together they set forth.

"The gentleman I am about to introduce you to," said the physician, "is one of our most eminent merchants, and his establishment is, perhaps, the largest of its kind to be found in our city. Personally I am but slightly acquainted with Mr. Sharpe. But on all hands, he bears the highest reputation, not only as a business man of great abilities, but as a philanthropist. He will be, not only your employer, but your friend. You are fortunate, indeed, in obtaining the vacancy in his store."

Horace could not find words to express his gratitude. He had not much time, however, to thank his com-

panion: for, in a few minutes, they were at Mr. Sharpe's store.

Mr. Sharpe, however, had not come down. He rarely appeared before ten o'clock, they were told. "But would they walk in?" The physician's equipage, in fact, deceived the clerks, who supposed that these were guests of importance. The doctor hesitated, but finally alighted, and was shown, with Horace, into Mr. Sharpe's private room.

It was a comparatively small apartment, but fitted up with great taste. A rich Axminster carpet buried the foot almost to the ankle; softly cushioned chairs suggested thoughts of after-dinner naps; and a bright fire of Liverpool coal, burning in the grate, threw a cheerful aspect over the room. There were no desks, but only a small writing-table, before which was an arm-chair, the very ideal of luxurious ease. It was evident that this was the seat of Mr. Sharpe, for the morning papers were laid on the table in front of it, as also the letters by the morning mail.

The physician placed his back to the fire, gazed awhile fidgetting around the apartment, and then, stroking his chin, appeared at last to have come to a conclusion.

"Very sorry, my lad," he said, speaking quickly, and clipping his words, as all whom Horace had yet met in this great city did, "but time's precious to a man like me, and I don't believe my staying will do any good either. I've spoken to Mr. Sharpe already about you. He'll recollect all when you mention my name. I'll leave a card with you, and when he comes in, you can introduce yourself."

And before Horace could reply, the physician had given him a card, and departed.

Left thus alone, his heart, for an instant, sank within him. But recollecting that he must learn to depend on himself, and that his whole future destiny might turn on his conduct in the approaching interview, he rallied his courage, and endeavored to pass the time till Mr. Sharpe's appearance, by thinking of his family and dreaming of fortune.

It was more than an hour before Mr. Sharpe came. Twice, during that time, the head-clerk outside, passing the glass-door of the private room, and seeing the lad sitting there alone, wondered what he could be doing. "Some young relation, I suppose," was his final conclusion, as he observed Horace's air of easy composure.

At last Mr. Sharpe arrived. He strode into the office, flinging the door open with a bang, and walked quickly up to the grate, rubbing his hands, and exclaiming, "Whew, what a morning for June." Suddenly his eye fell on Horace, who had risen as he entered. He stared at him, with a half start, and though he said nothing in words, his look asked plainly enough, "and who the devil are you?"

Horace's heart was in his throat. But it was for an instant only. With boyish grace and frankness he said, bowing,

"Mr. Sharpe, I suppose."

"Yes! Mr. Sharpe," was the reply, with a more astonished look than ever; and the great merchant measured the lad from head to foot.

Horace felt his courage sinking. But he was a brave boy, and he made another rally.

"Dr. Nelson came here with me, sir," he said, presenting the card, "but being too hurried to wait, he told me to remain till you came in. I am the lad from Virginia, about whom he spoke to you, sir."

There was a manly dignity in Horace as he said this, which would have struck most persons with admiration. But Mr. Sharpe saw in the speaker only an errand-boy applying for a place.

"Oh! yes!" he said, as the circumstance came back to his memory. "You're wanting a situation. All very correct. I remember now. But this is not the place, nor am I the person you want to see." And, as he spoke, he looked significantly to the door.

Poor Horace! He could with difficulty refrain from bursting into tears, for he understood, by these words, that he had come to the wrong store. There was a buzzing in his ears, and the room spun around him. He was roused from this state of mind by the voice of Mr. Sharpe speaking harshly and half angrily.

"Come, boy, don't stand there. This is my private room, where you are not to enter, unless called for. You understand." Horace did now begin dimly to guess the truth. "You must be more spry, or you'll never do. The head-clerk always attends to engaging the boys. You'll find him out there. Here, Howel," he said, fairly pushing the bewildered lad out, "here's a green hand from the South wants a place. You'll make room for him among the errand boys." And he finished by a look at the clerk, which said, "don't let me be bothered in this way again."

Horace felt as if he would have given the world to be, at that moment, where he could lay his head on Isabel's lap, and have a hearty cry. For, brave as his young heart was, it must be remembered that he had been tenderly brought up, and that he had been taught to consider nobody his superior.

"You've made a pretty beginning, I can tell you," sneered the head-clerk. "Lord, boy, the boss don't

think such understrappers as you good enough even to bring him in his newspapers. You'll have to come down a peg or two in your notions, if you expect to talk to him in that free-and-easy way." And he gave a coarse laugh.

Horace was on the point of answering as he felt. But impulsive as he was, he had too much at stake now to forget himself, and commit such a blunder. Yet the proud blood flushed over his face.

"But come," resumed the clerk. "There's no time to lose. Your salary, is that fixed?"

"Mr. Sharpe said nothing," replied Horace, as soon as he could compose himself to speak, "except to refer me to you. And Dr. Worthington told me that his friend, Dr. Nelson, would arrange it all. I know nothing about it except that. But I've come from Virginia to get a place, and I mean to do my duty, sir. I suppose," he added, mustering boldness for the emergency, "I'll get enough to live on, for I've no other means of support."

The head-clerk was not entirely a machine, nor altogether without a heart. He was touched by the gallant bearing of the lad, and answered, after a moment's reflection.

"I remember now that Dr. Nelson called about it, and Mr. Sharpe referred him to me. I told him I'd make room for you, and I will. The best I can do for you, however, is to place you on the list of errand-boys. Your business will be to fold goods, tie up parcels, and carry home purchases. Put your cap down here, and stand behind that counter."

"But the salary," said Horace, anxiously, for, amid all these disheartening rebuffs, he still thought of his family.

"Oh! that will be a dollar a week for the present."

"A dollar a week," repeated Horace, his voice faltering at the smallness of the sum. "But can I live on that?"

He thought no longer of being able, at least as yet, to assist Isabel. The question was now could he get along without aid from her.

"It will be a tight squeeze," said the clerk. "But you can get lodged and boarded for that, I guess; and your friends must clothe you till you can do better."

"A dollar a week," murmured Horace to himself, and then he reflected how, in his better days, he had squandered more than that amount in pocket money. But the clerk did not allow him to indulge in such reflections. Pushing him towards the counter, he said,

"There's some goods to be folded. Look alive now, and show what you're good for. Mind you go by the creases, and smooth the stuff carefully as you fold."

"But," interposed Horace, "hadn't I better go, to-day, and look out for some place to board? My trunk is still at the hotel." For he was thinking, with a heavy heart, that it would take a whole week's wages to pay for that single day's living. Already, you see, care had made him thoughtful of such things.

"It'll do at dinner time," replied the head-clerk. "Let's see, at first, if you're handy, for if you ain't, you might as well pack up your traps, and be off to Virginia again."

Such a prospect was enough to stimulate Horace to his utmost exertions. He said to himself that, come what might, he would not return to Virginia, to be a burden to Isabel. "Better die first," he mentally added.

So, without further words he betook himself to his

work. He labored all that morning incessantly, till his arms ached as if they had been beaten with rods. He was still busy when the head-clerk calling to him, said,

"Here's a bundle, which you are to take home for that lady; only be careful to follow her at a respectful distance. After that you may go to dinner: and needn't come back. But to-morrow you must be here at seven, sharp."

Horace took the bundle, and followed the customer. He was resolved to do any thing and every thing honest in order to keep his place. At first, indeed, the menial character of the office brought the indignant blood to his proud young cheek. But the remembrance of Isabel, that beautiful and accomplished sister, for whom he thought no station too exalted, teaching school, rose up and checked every rebellious thought.

"What would Uncle Peter," he said, "think, if he could see me now? Sunk to a level with his own children, perhaps to a lower one, for, on fifty dollars a year, I can't live, I fear, as well as they do."

A writer of mere fiction would have made this poor, brave-hearted lad sink, at once, under his misfortunes. But neither sorrow nor privation kills thus. God knows it would be a blessing if they did.

All the time he was following the customer home, and all the way thence to his hotel, Horace was considering where he should get board and lodgings. It must be very mean, he knew, even if he could get it at all. But he was determined to procure it somewhere, no matter how poor it was. Any thing was better, he continued to repeat, than going back to Virginia. Any fate was preferable to being a burden on that beautiful, beloved sister.

Ah! how soon a child grows old under circumstances like his. If you doubt it, go to one of our northern cities, and look at the sharp, prematurely thoughtful faces of the news-boys, of many of the errand-boys, and indeed, of all who, at an age they should be at school, are compelled to earn their living. Some of those countenances are as viciously cunning as that of yonder criminal in the penitentiary. But others, whom even starvation cannot drive into vice, wear a sad, uncomplaining look of suffering that cuts you to the heart to notice. Pale, patient faces! your day of retribution will come at last, not in this world perhaps, but in that Great Day when the Judge of all will make up his accounts, and when the dreadful sentence will be pronounced "Go to, ye rich men, weep and howl."

Horace would have applied to Dr. Nelson, for advice, but he did not wish to intrude on one, who evidently considered as wasted whatever time he spent on the lad.

The little hero was too proud to go again to the doctor if it could be avoided. Only when absolute necessity exacted it, as in the case of the duties at Mr. Sharpe's, could Horace conquer this pride. His resolution was wise, at least in this case. In a week Dr. Nelson resolved when he found time, to call at Mr. Sharpe's and enquire for the lad. But partly from a press of business, partly from indolence, he never could find the time: in a month his whilom protegee had quite passed from his mind.

Horace was late at dinner. But this fortunately turned out an advantage. The servant, who waited on him, was an Irish lad, but five or six years older than himself, who seemed struck to find one so young traveling alone. Insensibly, Horace never knew exactly how, the waiter was made the confidant of his troubles.

"If yer'd be afther taking a daecnt plaee," said the servant, on this, "its myself that can be putting ye in the way of it. My puir mother, the saints bless her, has a room to let, and would be glad of a nice, clane lodger. She's just from the ould eounthry. I saved all my wages to bring her out, and borrowed some of a fellow-sarvint; and she'd be plased to take ye, at laste till the debt is paid."

"Can you go with me to her?"

"Afther five o'eloek, I have a bit of holiday, for an hour at laste. Will that suit?"

So it was arranged. At the appointed hour, Horaee aecompanied the Irish lad, and was introduced, for the first time, into the poorer quarters of a great eity. Hitherto he had seen little except a few of the principal streets, those gay and glittering, but deeeitful thoroughfares, to look at which one would think that only luxury, wealth and happiness were to be found in a metropolis. But now the Irish lad, after walking about fifteen minutes, turned into a narrow alley, and paused before a dirty, weather-worn, tumble-down looking building, and was about entering, when Horace drew back, exelaiming,

"This ean't be the plaee, ean it?"

"Shure and it's the same," was the reply, with a look something of surprise. Then, more thoughtfully, he eontinued, "It's not as handsome as some others, but rint is high in a eity, and puir people must do jist the best they can."

Horaee felt a sickening feeling creeping over him as he eontemplated his future plaee of abode. Ever since they left the hotel, the streets had been growing narrower, the houses meaner, and the people dirtier. But the street they were now in was narrower and

filthier than any which had preceded it; and the grimed, ragged and often bloated population made him shudder with loathing. Some of the houses were of brick, tall, gaudily built edifices that had once been clean at least, but were now so stained with age, so cracked and tottering, so disfigured by broken spouts, sinking roofs, shattered shutters, and cracked panes stuffed with old rags, that they reminded the spectator of nothing so much as of the battered and diseased paupers that crowd the alms-house of a great metropolis. Others were of wood, and apparently had never known paint, ricketty old ruins they were, leaning to every point of the compass, with cats fighting on the roofs, clothes hanging from the casements to dry, and children, whose color could not be told for the dirt that disfigured them, rolling on the stoops, or lying on the foot-walk.

The house before which the Irish lad stopped was one of the former class. The main door-way was open, and disclosed what had once been a handsome hall, wainscoted to the height of three feet, but the once white paint was now of a dirty lead-color, while the paper on the wall was grimed with smoke and age, such of it at least as still clung to its place, for great strips had become loose and hung in tatters. A sort of meat and vegetable store was kept in what had once been the parlor of the house. On the stairs sat a half-grown girl, with bare legs and matted yellow hair, a wide rent in her faded frock revealing a soiled red petticoat underneath. She was trying to quiet an unhealthy looking infant, whose dress and face indiscriminately were smeared and dirty. Altogether, nothing had ever given Horace such an impression of filth and misery. His hesitation did not, however, last long.

He reflected that there was no choice before him. Return to Virginia he could not. Friends to help him he had none. There was nothing left, therefore, but to accept these accommodations, at least for the present. If, after he knew the city better, he could obtain more suitable lodgings, he would do so. With this mental reservation he silently followed his companion up stairs, the half-naked girl moving to one side to let them pass.

Up, up, flight after flight, the Irish boy led the way. Horace panted with the unusual exertion, and thought the staircase would never come to an end. But, at last, when the topmost story was reached, his conductor threw open a door, and entering, invited Horace, by a look, to follow.

The room was without carpet, without paper on the walls, without any thing, in short, to break its look of utter, utter poverty. A few broken chairs stood about: a table, without a cloth, showed the remains of a meal; a cheap, portable cooking-furnace was seen in the open fire-place; and, in one corner, stood a bed. These things were all in the further half of the room, which was comparatively clean, a Paradise, indeed, to the rest of the house. But in the part nearest the door stood a huge washing-tub, with a pile of clothes on the floor close at hand; and, at this tub, a brawny Irish woman was at work, bare-footed and bare-armed, rubbing away with might and main.

As the door opened, she turned, and recognizing her son, hastily wiped her arms, and, rushing to meet him, heartily embraced him.

"It's my heart that ye warm, Pathrick," she cried, "coming so often to see your poor ould mother. Holy Mary presarve us," she ejaculated, ceasing her embrace, and endeavoring hastily to smooth

down her wet dress, as she caught sight, for the first time, of Horace. "Is this yer manners," and she continued, chiding her son, "to bring a young gentleman here, without saying 'by yer leave,' or sending notice?" And she ended by a profound courtesy to Horace.

Miserably poor as they both were, and unlike in every respect to those he had been accustomed to associate with, there was yet a kind-heartedness, beaming from both mother and son, which drew the friendless lad toward them. Horace was still young enough to have retained something of that instinct, by which children know intuitively who are their friends, and who not. He felt immediately that here, humble as the house might be, he would find sympathy. And one must be like him, a friendless orphan, in a strange city, to know how his heart yearned for it, even from such as these. If he had doubted before what to do, his mind would now have been made up.

The Irish lad hastened to explain to his mother the purpose of Horace's visit, concluding by saying,

"I knew that the small room beyant was empty, barrin the bed and the two chairs, that the last lodger left. And the young gentleman is a dacent one," he added in a whisper, "and in throuble the day, it made my heart ache to see him. Besides, he'll come out of it, maybe, and then it'll be the betther for us both. Ye can take him for the dollar. It's all anyhow he has to give."

"If he can live on tay and 'taters, with bread, and maybe a bit of mate on Sunday?"

Horace could not but overhear most of this conversation, so, with natural delicacy, he spoke out.

"If you can give me a clean bed and clean victuals. I don't care how simple they are," he said.

"The Holy Virgin bless ye," said the washerwoman, "ye're a brave lad anyhow, and shure ye'll be President yet."

Horace smiled. He liked his humble landlady more and more. After a few additional words, and a scrutiny of the bed-chamber, which proved clean though small, it was settled that his trunk should be removed from the hotel at once, and that he should sleep that night in his new lodgings.

Oh! ye, who see only the misery of the slave child, torn from his parents, have ye no tears for the delicately nurtured lad, forced from his home, and consigned to a life a thousand times more harrowing because of his previous habits? Or can ye see only the lesser and more distant evil, and not the one that cries to Heaven at your doors?

CHAPTER IX.

THE NORTHERN SLAVE.

THE next day Horace was early at the store. He labored incessantly all day, except during the interval allowed for dinner, and went home at night so fatigued that he could scarcely drag one weary limb after the other. Never having been accustomed to protracted manual labor he suffered to a degree that others could hardly comprehend.

The following day, he rose stiff and sore. "Oh! if

I could but rest to-day," he reflected, as he hastily dressed himself. But there was no time to be lost in repinings, for it was about half-past six, and he had to despatch his frugal meal and reach the store by the time the clock struck seven.

Horace made it a point never to be idle for a moment, if there was a piece of goods to be replaced on the shelf, or any thing else to be done. He hoped in this way to command the notice of the head-clerk, and through him of Mr. Sharpe, for he still dreamed, poor lad, of the dear ones at home, and of yet being able to help them. At the end of the week, he was carelessly told by the clerk, that he might stay; but no word of encouragement was bestowed on him; and at this, it must be confessed, the spirits of Horace fell. However he consoled himself that the approbation would come some day, if he deserved it; and so he worked the harder.

The other lads in the store were not long in making an acquaintance with him.

"What do you do with yourself at nights, Courtenay?" said one of them. "I never see you about town."

Horace answered ingenuously,

"I stay at home. Sometimes I read, sometimes I write to my sister, but oftener I go to bed, for I'm mostly tired."

"I don't wonder at that, for you work like a nigger-slave," coarsely said the boy, with a laugh.

"I never saw a slave work half as hard," replied Horace. "They seem at the North here, to expect boys to do a great deal." And he sighed.

"Oh! I remember, you're from the South. But what, in the dickens, brought you North, if they've got nig-

gers to do the work there. You didn't run away from school, did you?"

"No," replied Horace, indignantly.

"Well, you needn't flare up about it. What was it then?"

The tears came into Horace's eyes; he could not help it: for the memory of the past rose before him at these words.

The boy gave a jeering laugh.

"Come here, Jim," he said, calling to another shop-lad, "Courtenay's crying? Reg'lar milk-sop, ain't he? Wonder if his mammy knows he's out?"

Horace's tears ceased on the instant. His cheek flushed. His little hand clenched itself instinctively. But, before his indignation found expression in the contemplated blow, he remembered how Isabel had charged him, with tears, to control his temper. He had promised to obey her, and come what might, he was resolved to do it for her. He turned away, therefore, silently, though his blood tingled to his fingers' ends, as he heard Jim reply,

"He's a coward too. Didn't you see he was going to strike you and was afeerd?"

Another time one of the boys, on a Saturday afternoon, asked Horace to accompany him to Hoboken the following morning.

"I never go pleasuring on a Sunday," said Horace, by way of apology for declining. "I promised Isabel I wouldn't."

"Isabel! Who's she? Gad, Jim," and he called to the lad before introduced, "here's Courtenay got a gal already. Where does she live, my young buck?"

The speaker was one of the oldest of the boys. Horace could scarcely understand his allusion, but knew,

from the insolent manner, that it was something insulting. Again his eye kindled. Again his little heart struggled almost to bursting. But he choked down his emotion, and answered.

"Isabel's my sister."

"Your sister, ah! Is she pretty?"

With natural pride the brother answered,

"I never saw any one so handsome."

"The devil you didn't. And where do you keep this choice bit? She's a milliner of course," and he winked at the other boys, who, adepts already in the cant phrases of vice, laughed at the coarse jest.

Horace looked from one to the other, tears of rage and mortification in his eyes. At last he said, speaking with spirit.

"I don't know what you mean. But sister Isabel's a lady, and wouldn't speak to such a fellow as you, that she wouldn't."

"Oh! she is a lady, that's too good," retorted the lad, laughing immoderately. And he added tauntingly. "Why don't she send her carriage, every night, to take her dear bub home? I suppose the young gentleman carries bundles about town for amusement." And he laughed again at the other boys, who replied by another general burst of laughter.

Another time Jim asked Horace to go to the theatre.

"No, thank you," said Horace, for experience had taught him not to volunteer his reasons, as he knew they would only furnish materials for mirth and ridicule.

"But I'll stand the shot."

"No, I thank you," persisted Horace.

"But why?"

"I'd rather not."

"You must have some reason. Out with it. You ain't too pious?"

Horace was too brave and good ever to deny the truth.

"I promised sister Isabel not to go to such places."

"Why what a little saint you are! And I suppose your sister is just such another."

Horace made no reply, but busied himself with folding up some goods. After awhile Jim returned to the attack. This lad had shown quite a disposition to be intimate with Horace, principally because our hero was more "genteel-looking," as he said, than the other boys; but his vulgar habits, coarse slang, and practice of constant blasphemy had made Horace repulse every advance.

"You don't intend always to be such a prig," he said. "You're too old to be tied to your sister's apron strings."

Horace felt his indignation rising, but nobly refrained from an answer, and went on quietly with his work.

"The cat's run away with baby's tongue," said Jim, mockingly, at last. "It can't talk." And he raised his voice, so that all the lads near could hear. The result, as he had expected, was a laugh of derision.

Perhaps there can be nothing more insulting to a boy of Horace's age than taunts and jeers like this. But the little fellow smothered his feelings, swallowing the indignation that rose in his throat, and pressing back, with one great effort, the tears of mortified pride that started to his eyes.

Many such a scene took place. The boys soon came to take a delight in baiting poor Horace, and whenever a pause in the throng of shoppers allowed it and the elder clerks were out of hearing, they

began their cruel sport. His refinement of manner, and strict principles were, in truth, reflections on their own vulgarity and wickedness: and feeling this they thus took their revenge.

Often the heroic little lad, after a day of such mortifications, would wet his pillow with tears late into the night. Smile not, reader, at his sensitiveness. If ever you have been an orphan, alone and persecuted as he was, you know how bitter such systematic slights and insults are to a nature like his. God forbid, if you have never experienced this lot, that your children should. Better almost lay them in early graves.

Week followed week, yet Horace received no word of encouragement, as he had hoped. Often, when he went up to be paid on Saturday night, it was with a fluttering heart, half expecting that the praise for which he had striven so hard, and the increase of salary, was about to come at last. Vain hope! In that vast establishment he was but a cypher, unheeded, uncared for, regarded only as so much bone and muscle, with whom the head of the store had no relation except to pay him a dollar weekly. And yet Mr. Sharpe made long prayers about the heathen, and talked of Southern slave-masters as of devils incarnate.

A few of the under-clerks, young men not entirely destitute of sympathy, and in whom mammon-worship had not yet destroyed every perception of duty, saw and esteemed the lad; and one of them, on closing the store one evening, joined Horace, and began, in a kindly way, to talk to him.

"You look weakly to work so hard, my boy," he said. "I don't think you seem as well either as when you came."

"Do you think so?"

Horace spoke anxiously. He had been conscious, of late, of a growing lassitude. He did not always sleep well of nights. Sometimes he rose with a head-ache. Occasionally sudden fits of trembling would seize him, which, for the time, would deprive him of all strength. These things he only cared for as they threatened to interfere with his secret ambition of attracting his employer's notice, rising in the store, and so being able to assist Isabel. For this ambition grew instead of fading. Every new disappointment, indeed, only increased that intense, absorbing desire of the poor lad to do something for that mother, brother, and sister at home.

The oftener he heard from Virginia the more powerful this wish became. Though Isabel tried to write cheerfully, she did not succeed in deceiving him, for he practised the same innocent treachery on her and knew how to detect it. "Oh! if I could only assist her, ever so little," he said, "it might save her some of this trouble. She tells me brother has been a little sick. I fear he has been a good deal so. But I will work harder than ever, and must, oh! I must be rewarded." Thus this desire grew to be a passion. It was the one sole purpose of the lad's life. He thought of it awake and in dreams. Every action centered in it. He was as much a martyr to that holy, secret wish as many a man, who, by some great self-sacrifice, more famous, but not less worthy, has made the heart of humanity thrill, through after ages, with admiration and love.

The mere possibility, therefore, that he was getting weaker, and that he might have consequently to work

less, or give up his place, either involving the destruction of his idolized dream, made his heart sick.

"Do you think I'm not strong enough?" he said anxiously, finding his companion did not reply. "Oh! you should see what big bundles I can carry."

"I fear you sometimes carry bundles that are too big," answered the clerk, eluding the direct question. "I never saw a boy work so hard."

Horace, though so reserved generally, could be frank with persons who showed an interest in him; and his little heart opened itself to his companion, freely and fully. He told the clerk of his family and of his purpose in coming North; and then spoke of the hopes he still entertained of triumphing.

"I'm willing to do any thing. I'll work day and night, or as long as I can stand," he said. "I *will* succeed. For I mustn't, mustn't fail."

Here his voice gave way, and the poor little fellow burst into tears. The mere possibility of failure was a picture he could not contemplate unmoved.

It was some time before his companion spoke. The clerk was himself working on an insufficient salary, and had to assist in supporting a widowed mother and sisters. He could, therefore, feel for Horace. But he was older, and more experienced in the world, and he saw, what the young enthusiast could not, that this bright day-dream of assisting Isabel could never be realized. Yet he hesitated to tell the lad so. It seemed cruel to dissipate that generous illusion.

But was it not more cruel, he asked himself, to permit this hallucination to go on? The clerk saw that Horace was working beyond his strength. Perhaps the lad might irreparably injure his constitution by this assiduity, which, after all, would be useless. For at the

mere idea of an errand lad attracting Mr. Sharpe's attention, and being promoted to a more responsible station immediately, the clerk laughed in secret bitterness of heart.

For some time, therefore, he walked in silence by the side of Horace. But at last his mind was made up. He considered it his duty to lessen the lad's faith a little, at any rate, in this visionary dream. Time, he mentally said, would do the rest.

"But you work beyond your strength," he remarked, continuing the conversation, from where it had broken off. "Besides, as you havn't already attracted Mr. Sharpe's attention, or even that of the head-clerk, I'm afraid you never can, at least in this way."

He looked at the lad to see how his words were taken, and not without an instinctive fear of their effects.

Horace turned ashy pale. "Do you think," he faltered, after a moment, "do you really think this?"

"I'm afraid you've been leaning on a broken reed, my poor boy."

The tears gushed into Horace's eyes. But, with the resolution of a martyr at the stake, he gulped down the sob that accompanied them, determined to show no emotion.

"Tell me the worst," he said, turning to the clerk. "How long will I be kept at this salary?"

"It may be a year, it may be longer. No, confound it," he said testily, "I won't be a party to deceiving you. As long as you stay at Mr. Sharpe's, you'll get your dollar a week, and no more. When you become too big, you'll be turned off, if you don't leave before."

Horace had stopped. His hands hung listlessly

at his side. He looked almost like one struck dumb with a great death-blow that had gone right to the heart. At last he said, oh! how mournfully,

"And don't they ever promote boys to be clerks?"

"Not in Mr. Sharpe's store. The clerks get their situations through influential friends. I got mine in that way, and there were ten applicants. Besides we have to know book-keeping, and to write a large, round, elegant hand."

"I could learn."

"Alas! you are too young. Your little wrist hasn't the strength."

Horace gave a big, convulsive sob, that sounded as if all the woes of all the orphans, made penniless since the foundations of the world, and left to die struggling with flinty-hearted men, had there found voice. But again the heroic heart of the boy conquered his weakness, or what he considered such; and he calmly resumed his walk, his companion accompanying him pityingly.

"A poor, friendless boy has little chance," said the clerk, after some minutes spent in silence, "to make his way in a great city. Occasionally one rises, after years of toil and self-abasement worse than toil, to wealth; and his success deludes others into coming here from the country. But the great mass perish in this struggle for fortune, where there is but one plank among a thousand drowning wretches. Without capital a man has but a poor chance now-a-days." He was talking to himself rather than to Horace. "Year by year it is the same dull drudgery. Now and then a lucky speculation raises a poor clerk into the saddle, when, if he has profited by experience, he may ride on to fortune. But, without some extraordinary luck like this,

one may die a clerk, on a bachelor's salary, like old grey-headed Jones."

Horace heard these words as one hears sometimes in a dream. He was only half conscious of them. They made no impression on him then, but in after hours they rose to his memory, when the paralysis of this first shock had passed partially away. He was now still brooding on the destruction of his bright visions.

"I'll never get any more at Mr. Sharpe's," he said at last. "Why the head-clerk, when I told him I couldn't live on a dollar a week, as much as said I should have my salary raised by and by."

"It's a trick they have," bitterly said the clerk. "I wouldn't stay in the store a day if I knew of a better place. But I don't. And my mother and sisters must have bread."

Horace looked at him pityingly, forgetting, for a second, his own great sorrow. But it was for a second only. The blow he had received stunned him against any other lasting sensation but that of his own pain.

"There are places," said the lad at last, rallying bravely for a fresh effort, "where a boy can make his way, are there not? Surely there must be some few such stores."

"There are. If you could get into one, you might rise in time; for you'll do it," and he spoke encouragingly, "if it is to be done. Yet it would be a long while before you could do any thing for your family."

"Won't you ask after such a place, if you get a chance?" said Horace. "I shouldn't leave Mr. Sharpe's, you know, without giving him fair warning."

"Your honorable conduct, my poor lad," said the clerk, "would be cast away on such a subject. Sharpe wouldn't hesitate to turn you off, without a minute's warning, if it suited him. Did he never pay you in uncurrent money?"

Horace recollected that he had been paid, several times, with a ragged dollar note, which his honest landlady apostrophized rather severely: and he said so.

"Mr. Sharpe buys that money, every week, to pay us off with. He gets it sometimes at two per cent. discount. So you see, he makes a clean shave. There's where he goes to church, by-the-by," and he pointed to an elaborately built temple across the way. "People that pray in such palaces must make up the cost out of poor devils like me, or they can't say 'Our Father' with any unction."

The slight tone of irreverence in his speech Horace heard with pain. But the clerk said nothing more, and, soon after, their ways separating, they parted.

Horace staggered home, he scarcely knew how. The narrow meal was left untasted. He made an excuse to get to bed, as stealthily as possible, and leaving the poor washerwoman, stole into his little comfortless room, where he threw himself on his bed, without undressing, and gave way to sobs and tears, his only care being that he should not be overheard.

He came out to breakfast the next morning, at the usual hour, but the observant landlady saw that he had slept little. She said nothing, however. She had learned already that the lad often buried his griefs, whatever they were, in the recesses of his own bosom, with the stoicism and pride of mature manhood. For he would frequently persist in secresy, even with her. But finally the waters would overflow, when the young,

desolate heart would yield itself up, in a passion of childish sorrow, to sympathy.

Weeks passed. The step of the lad grew feebler, and his cheek paler day by day. Yet still he hugged his secret grief, whatever it was, to his bosom. The washerwoman, concerned at these signs of failing health, would have had his friends written to, but she did not know where they were, and when she endeavored to extract the information from Horace, he evaded a reply, as if he had discovered her motive.

For the boy still resolved that he would succeed, or die unnoticed. He had not yet given up the hope of another place, though every inquiry of his friend had proved unsuccessful. Several times he had secretly essayed to find a store for himself, but his delicate look always caused the same negative shake of the head, the same curt, "you wouldn't do."

Brave little hero. There have been martyrs who have died on the scaffold less deserving than thou. All through the protracted summer and autumn months thou did'st face what was worse than death.

No applauding thousands witnessed that silent, uncomplaining self-immolation. No consciousness of filling an immortal page in history was thine. It was to assist that beautiful and beloved sister, that mother, that baby-brother, thou did'st battle in that black whirlpool, under a dark, hopeless sky. And none knew of thy struggle.

Yes! God knew of it. He heard thy nightly, stifling prayers; and he made record of them against the Judgment Day.

CHAPTER X.

THE FUGITIVES.

CHARLES had no difficulty in making his escape to the North. He possessed a pass for both himself and Cora, and having laid by some money, there was nothing to check his flight. He was so impressed, however, with the idea that he would be pursued, that he took a circuitous stage-route, instead of making at once for the North along the nearest road.

When, at last, he crossed the frontier, and stood on the soil of a free state, he felt, instead of the exultation he had promised himself, a sinking of the heart indescribable. For the experience of the last three days had taught him to realize that his new condition involved new responsibilities, a contingency he had not duly considered before. Already his stock of money was much diminished, and the necessity of replenishing it began to force itself on him. But how?

He was like one suddenly placed in a new world, where every thing was strange. The faces of the people wore a foreign aspect, and the habits of life were such as he was unused to. Even men of the greatest energy experience this sinking of the heart, when they find themselves in a similar condition. But Charles was a mere child in character. And now, when he saw there was no one for him to lean upon, when he felt that he must depend wholly upon himself, he would, in

that first moment of despondency, have turned back on his steps but for very shame.

In vain he looked to Cora for help. His wife had never ceased, since they set out, regretting the step she had taken. Probably, if it was to be done over again, she would, after a similar struggle, have yielded again to Charles. But now that the fear of losing him was laid to rest for the present, now that the separation from her mistress was uppermost in her mind, she censured herself for her ingratitude, and was continually dwelling, in imagination, on the sorrowful anger of Isabel. The untried world on which she was entering had nothing inviting to Cora. To her it was only a bleak, forbidding waste. No visions of home were connected with it, it had no friends to welcome her, and as she was eminently a creature of the affections, she felt desolate beyond description. This feeling of utter loneliness was the greater, perhaps, because she expected, before many months, to become a mother; and the idea of spending her hour of agony, among strangers, and not, as she had hoped, with Isabel by to sustain her, now almost broke her heart. She could not think of it without tears.

Not every one of the harder and sterner race to which we belong can realize, to its full extent at least, the prostration of spirits which overcame both Charles and Cora. Self-reliance is the peculiar characteristic of the Anglo-Saxon. In him the feeling is developed to such an extent, that any restraint on it is intolerable. He explores unknown seas, and dares unheard of perils, merely from the love of adventure or the hope of fame. In a less degree the other white races imitate this, decreasing in energy, however, as they recede from the former stock, and approach the dark races.

When the native African is reached, we find him content with his hut and his palm shade, never venturing beyond his own continent of his own accord, perhaps never leaving his petty territory, but continuing the same to-day as he was in the early twilight of the world. He is a creature of routine altogether. He shrinks from the untried. To such an extent does he carry this that the Anglo-Saxon must know him long and intimately before he can comprehend him fully. Most authors of fiction have utterly misconceived the African character, which they represent as full of the same indomitable enterprise, and the same intense appreciation of personal independence as their own. The mulatto has frequently not a little of the hard, Teutonic element, but as frequently only the more pliable one of his African parent. Neither Charles nor Cora possessed much of the former. Hence it was that on finding themselves, in this new, strange world, their courage sank, as when a man, unused to swim, falls into deep waters and sinks almost without a struggle.

"I wish I knew where to go," said Charles, despondingly, as they sat alone in the country tavern, where the stage had just put them down.

"Oh! let us go back," said Cora, clasping her hands. "I'm sure missis will forgive us."

Charles remembered his dogged pertinacity in the conversation with Uncle Peter, and this made the idea of returning, even to his despondent mind, full of mortification. He answered angrily,

"Don't talk like a fool, Cora. You ain't fit to be any thing but a slave. Go back, however, if you want to."

That was the first time he had ever spoken to her

so harshly, and, in her present want of spirits, it utterly broke her down. She burst into a fit of hysterical tears.

The heart of Charles smote him. He had spoken in irritation, and the irritation was the greater, that he felt, in part, a similar regret at the step he had taken. But now succeeded remorse for his harshness. He had, like all his race, something of a woman's exquisite tenderness, and he felt those tears as if they had been drops of molten lead upon his soul.

He took Cora in his arms, and besought her forgiveness, and she, true woman, pardoned all, and loved him the better for having thus forgiven him.

Chance finally directed the steps of the fugitives to a settlement, which had grown up, from one or two rude huts, to quite a village, and which was inhabited entirely by blacks. Charles thought he could find some employment, in the neighborhood, by which he could support Cora. And Cora thought, if she could get some sewing to do, she could assist materially towards the household expenses.

The settlement, though in a rich agricultural country, was more immediately located in the centre of a large tract of woodland. The trees had been cut off formerly, and a new growth was springing up, of that short, scrubby character seen in regions where pines succeed the oak, when the latter has fallen under the axe. To make room for the village, a space had been cleared, a second time, in the heart of the forest. The little gardens, or fields, for some were the latter, attached to the houses, showed every where unsightly stumps. The dwellings were mere log-cabins, rarely even white-washed. The fences and roads, in fact all things about the place were of the rudest de-

scription. Cora shrunk back in the wagon when she saw the settlement, and recalled, with a sigh, the image of her neat apartment in Virginia.

Charles had hired a cabin of a colored man, who was about to try his fortunes further North. The hut was a thousand times more comfortless than he had imagined it could possibly be, though his expectations had not been extravagant, for Charles was no longer sanguine. He sighed when he saw its leaky, rough appearanee. Looking around its single, narrow room, where it was evident that animals not human had been frequent visitors, he regretted he had bought so mueh furniture, though his failing purse had foreed him to purehase less than he thought Cora could get along with. The broken garden palings, the dilapidated well-head, the smoky ehimney, and the pool of water that collecting at the door on rainy days kept the floor inside wet, were discomforts that it took him some time to discover, or he might, perhaps, have turned baek, goods and all, and sought a refuge elsewhere.

The young couple were immediately an object of curiosity to the whole settlement. In looks, manners, and mental cultivation, they were immeasurably ahead of the other inhabitants. Maintaining a striet reserve as to their antecedents, a line of conduet Charles adopted from poliey, and Cora from a retiring disposition, they furnished an unflagging subject for curiosity and gossip. The most important member of the confederaey, who chiefly followed the occupation of preacher, and who fancied that he could penetrate their secret, pronouneed them, on being rebuffed, "sinfully proud and high in their notions, and good-for-nothing runaway niggers, he had no doubt." Even his wife, less conceited, and more estimable in every way, declared,

after a patronizing afternoon's visit to Cora, that she feared "they had been a doing sometin' berry wicked, for the young colored woman were allers down-hearted, and once had bust out a cryin'."

The expectation of Charles that he would be able to find employment in the neighborhood proved a disappointment. The white inhabitants of the vicinity were generally wealthy farmers, who wanted only able-bodied men, accustomed to severe labor. Some of the villagers partially supported themselves in this way, for they could not always get constant work. But how others lived, or how these eked out the winter months, when employment was scarce, was a riddle to Charles. He had thought to obtain a situation as waiter, or perhaps coachman, in some rich rural family, but he discovered now, that among Northern agriculturists, waiters and hired coachmen were almost unknown. He tried working in the field, and indeed persisted in it as long as he could get jobs, but as he never had been accustomed to it, and as he was slightly built, he fell behind the rest, and the consequence was that, when the hurry began to pass over, so that extra hands were no longer required, he was the first that was discharged.

"I'm afraid we've come to the wrong place, Cora," he said, one day, when he had been idle for nearly a week. "There don't seem much to do here, and what there is I'm not accustomed to. I've half a mind to try the city."

At the name of the city Cora shuddered. Some of her female neighbors had lived there, and the descriptions they gave of it, though not unfrequently intended to be favorable, had left on her a vague impression of dirt, destitution, and misery intolerable, and all this

in the heart of a vast machine, that went on day and night roaring and crunching, forever and forever.

"It's very hard to get along here," she said, however, for she relied on Charles now in all things, having no one else to lean upon. "You work too hard, poor fellow." And, with tender solicitude, she stroked back his hair and kissed his forehead.

"Yet," said Charles, pursuing a train of thought which had been perplexing him all the morning, "I don't know what to do when I get there. They say a colored man can't get a place till he's recommendations. Besides it costs more to live in a city. Yet we can't stay here, that's a sure fact, for my money's most gone."

"If I could get some sewing to do, we might get along for awhile."

"The farmers' wives and daughters mostly do their own sewing, so there's no chance for that. In a city you might, maybe, get some."

Cora sighed at the prospect. To be again removed, where she knew nobody, and to settle in a great, heartless city at that,—her soul sank at the prospect. But she could do nothing but follow her husband's lead. She could suggest no other resource. So she replied meekly,

"Whatever you'se thinks best, Charles, I'se willing for. Perhaps the Wheatleys can give us some advice, we're to go there to supper you know."

The Wheatleys were the occupants of the next house, and the most intimate of all Cora's acquaintance. Mrs. Wheatley had been, from the first, a sort of mother to the friendless girl, and Cora's heart had clung to her in return. The husband had been born free, and had been in many parts of the United States, so

that he might, Cora thought, be of service to Charles in this emergency.

There were two or three other families invited to the Wheatleys. The sitting-room was quite crowded when Cora and her husband arrived, for the dwelling of their host boasted two apartments on the ground floor, besides a loft above. When the table came to be set, the men had to be asked out into the garden in front, until the supper was ready to be served. There was a great deal of noisy buffoonery, which passed for wit, both among the men and women, which made Cora's head ache, and which often secretly disgusted her by its coarseness, or offended her when aimed at herself. But, on the whole, it was a hilarious, good-tempered, well-meaning assembly; and when the viands were set, Cora and Charles, as the guests most to be honored, were shown to the principal places.

It was a feast such as the fugitives had not seen since they arrived at the settlement. Charles could not comprehend how their entertainers could afford the poultry, which smoked every where on the board, for he knew that they kept none themselves. But he was too well-bred to say any thing.

"Eat plenty, honey," said the dame, addressing Cora, piling up her plate afresh. "Somehow I doesn't think you get much chicken in yer house. I nebber smells 'em cookin'."

Cora was compelled to acknowledge, with embarrassment, that she had tasted none since she came to the village.

At this there was a general laugh. To the look of surprise, which appeared on the faces of both Charles and Cora, the host himself replied,

"Dey's chil'en yet, an' got to larn. Can't 'spec

young folks, can yer, friends, to know as much as dere congenetors."

Another laugh went around the board, and Charles seeing there was something he was supposed not to know, tacitly resolved on seeking the first opportunity for an explanation.

After the supper had been pretty well discussed, and there was little left but a mountain of bones by every guest, Charles introduced his project of going to the city.

"Well, since yer axes my advice," said the host importantly, "I'se gib it to yer free gratis for nothin'." This, which was intended for wit, was so received, all the company, except Charles and Cora, going into broad grins. "Yer sees I'se been a great traveller, goin' up an' down dis 'varsal globe, but not like dat roarin' lion who shall be nameless," another laugh, "but like Columbus, dat great recoverer, when he was a sarchin' for dis 'ere land of 'Merika, for I was sarchin' for a livin', which completes, yer sees, de 'strornary resemblance."

At this point the speaker paused a moment, to take another mouthful of the succulent joint which he held in his hand, which, having done, and wiped his mouth with his palm, he went on with a slight apology.

"I'se been waitin' on de rest, yer must remember, gemmen an' ladies, an' so hab got behin' time, as de cart said to de locomotive." Another laugh. "But to return to dis question under consideration, 'bout de perpriety of our young frien' here gwine to de city. I hab dis to say, beloved listeners." As the orator exhorted sometimes, he could not always free himself of the characteristic phrases. "De city is a

place full of temptations, like dat great Babylon of old, and dere isn't besides de superfluity of comfort dat de country affords. Nevertheless, an' notwithstandin', hodever, de gifts of some doesn't lie in dat way of rural ferlicerty, but in de vainer an' more bustlin' occupations of a city, an' to such I say, dat de city should be dar home an' habitation. Now I 'spec our young frien' one of dese. He flourish better in de city, just as I do in de country. For ten years I tried de city, but found it as King Daniel says, 'Vanity, vanity, all is vanity.' Yes, dearly beloved brederen, it is all vanity, an' nothin' like dis." And he flourished the chicken-bone, while there was a general laugh.

"Have you ever been in Canada?" said Charles. "I sometimes think of going there."

"Yes, I hab been dar. But dat's no country for a gemman of color to preside in, sar. Snow on de groun' dere for six months of de year." And he shivered at the very recollection. "No, sar, wid yer tastes, I'se prognosticate de city's de bery best place yer can go to."

Charles received much the same advice from others whose opinion he sought. Most of them admitted that the city was, in many respects, preferable to the settlement, and all conceded that it would be better suited to him. One of the most honest frankly said to him in confidence,

"Truf is, sar, most of dese yer niggers am lazy, dat's a fac, an' live 'way here in de woods 'kase dey can git along widout much work."

"But how then do they live?" said Charles. And, remembering the poultry at Wheatley's, he asked for an explanation of this apparent affluence of means.

"Dey lives by stealin'," was the answer, and as Charles showed his surprise, the old fellow laughed and said. "'Deed it's a fac, sar. Yer knows now how dey lives so well. Ax de farmers 'bout here war der chickens go to, an' dey tell yer dat de dam black niggers steal 'em. Ha! Ha! I'se know'd a man, in dis berry place, sar, dat helped his-self to de whole of farmer Newton's pork-tub, one night las' winter, an' de farmer nebber de wiser till nex' day, when de ole woman gwine to git some pork for dinner, an' find none. Ha! Ha!"

This solution to the luxurious living which he saw occasionally around him, completed the disgust, that the coarse manners of his neighbors, their filthy persons, and his own penury had created, in his mind, against the settlement. As his purse was nearly exhausted, no time was to be lost in removing, else he might be left, he reflected, without the means of departure. Accordingly to the city he went.

The picture of the black settlement, reader, is no fancy sketch. We have seen the very counterpart of the village described; and many similar ones exist in the North, but especially in New Jersey. Wherever they happen to be located, they become the terror of the farmers, for miles around, being chiefly populated by incorrigibly indolent negroes, who eke out a subsistence by plundering the barns, poultry-yards, and smoke-houses of their white neighbors.

They are driven to this, some will say, by the want of sufficient work in the neighborhood, and by the severe winters which half stupify some of their race, and incapacitate them for active exertion.

But this is saying that they will not understand the law of supply and demand, that they will not remove where there is a market for their labor. And to

what conclusion does that lead, Oh! ye reformers of the Tabernacle.

CHAPTER XI.

THE BLACK SUBURB.

CHARLES found accommodations in the city with some difficulty. As a stranger, he was regarded with suspicion in most quarters where he applied. His small means, which he felt the necessity of husbanding, forbade his indulging in extravagant lodgings. Thus he found himself compelled to resort to the black suburb, as it was called, a quarter that he would have desired to avoid, on account of its want of respectability, if for nothing else.

How this suburb ever came to exist in a city so wealthy and enlightened, and how it is suffered to continue, is a problem we do not pretend to solve. But there it stands, as it has stood beyond the memory of living men, a vast sink of filth, destitution, vice, crime, disease, and ungodliness of every description, a reproach on the boasted civilization of the city, a mockery of the philanthropy, which can see evils every where else, but has no eye for its own social sores. The very walls of that dingy, pestiferous, Pariah-haunted quarter seem to say:—"Ye blind guides, which strain at a gnat, and swallow a camel. Woe unto you, Scribes and Pharisees—"

You are met by signs of the approaching quarter long before you actually reach it. Repulsive looking

blacks, filthy, or sensual, or both, begin to appear, some lounging lazily along, others picking up rags and bones. Here and there you see a dirty urchin, all in tatters, and without shoes or cap, eating a rotten peach which some housewife has thrown away, and he has just picked up. Next the houses begin to assume a decaying look. The wood-work is unpainted, the mortar has disintegrated from between the bricks, the water-spouts are broken off, the shutters frequently hang by one hinge, bricks loosened from the chimneys lie on the blackened roofs, the gutters are choked up with all sorts of decomposing refuse, and the pavements are broken, irregular, and often slimy with mud. Miserable stores, usually in old framed houses, are seen here and there. These have generally but one window, where candies, lemons, sausages, fruit, segars, pipes, vegetables, and dead flies are mingled promiscuously together, the whole being dimly visible through panes that have probably not been washed for a year. By the door stands a barrel of charcoal, or an armful of wood to be sold by the cent's worth, or on a broken chair a tub of cold water in which are bottles of ginger-pop, spruce-beer, or mead, with a dirty tumbler turned over the top of one of the bottles. Within appears a counter, painted blue or green, with oily butter, tallow candles, lard and sugar inviting purchase. Sometimes an inside door leads to an apartment behind, where, if the door is open, a filthy-looking bed, or an old settee covered with ragged quilts may be seen; but sometimes there is only a dirty curtain which divides into two, what was originally intended for a single apartment. Unmistakeable signs of cooking utensils, besides the greasy

smell, show that this is the room where the family live, the chambers up stairs being let out to lodgers.

Often the stores are of a different description. They are places where old iron is sold, the pavement being lumbered up with broken stoves, or barrels full of scraps, and the window and door being crowded with rusty chains, hinges, locks, shovels, tongs, spikes and nails of every size and make. Or they are marts for the sale of cast-off clothing. Napless hats, waxy pantaloons, odd boots and shoes, crumpled bonnets of silk that have once been white, coats of every fashion and age, faded and tattered shawls, and dresses of calico, lawn, de laine, or silk, some flounced, some trimmed with fringe or lace, some that had once cost enormous sums and rustled at the most exclusive balls, but all greasy, stained, or spotted with grimy dirt. Or they are low pawn-shops. Here three gilt balls hanging over the door, and the words, "money loaned on goods of every description," offer delusive relief to poverty, or hold out a bounty on crime. Old prints on the walls; mock jewelry, lamps and candlesticks in the windows; tables, chairs, bedsteads, cradles, bureaus, bits of carpeting, beds and pillows, scraps of oil-cloth, portable furnaces, and all the wrecks of hopeless destitution, crowd the shop floor. Now and then abject-looking creatures may be seen leaving those greedy warehouses of Mammon, where the traffic is in the life of the victim, often in his soul. Bloated whites or blacks, selling the covering off their offspring, to get the means to purchase rum. Wives parting with their wedding-rings to buy medicine for a sick husband. Mothers pawning their very garments to procure bread for their starving little ones. Children, little children, heritors of immortal woe or bliss, bargaining

away the first fruits of theft, and learning, from the leer of the ghoul within, that, from that day, they are his, body and soul, to do his work of hell, and yet be devoured at last.

Finally you enter a dirty, narrow alley, where the close atmosphere almost sickens you; and now you are, at last, in a Northern negro quarter. The houses are mostly old, tumble-down wooden structures, two stories high, and black with age, or brick dwellings with more capacity and pretension, dirty beyond imagination, and inhabited by ten or a dozen families each. Scattered about the middle of the narrow street are piles of decaying vegetables, with here and there an old shoe, or perhaps a ragged straw hat, half sticking out of the reeking mass. The gutters are stagnant with filthy water, in which nearly naked children, sitting on the curb, dabble their feet. On the cellar-doors older ones may be seen kicking up their heels, or basking in the sun like black snakes. Most of these have bow-legs, or enormous heads, or present other frightful or repulsive deformities. Along the street voices are heard crying, "crabs, crabs O, crabs alive." At the corners are seen drunken, quarrelsome men, the lowest types of degraded humanity. On the door-steps sit disgusting creatures, black or yellow, in the attire of women, generally large and filthily dirty, with sleeveless dresses torn and greasy, bare shoulders, bosoms lewdly exposed, hair uncombed and matted, and legs and feet naked. Go there when you will they are always idle. They pass the time calling to each other across the street, bandying vulgar jests, or swearing oaths of horrible blasphemy.

It was in this quarter that poor Cora found a refuge, at last, on the very eve of her great trial.

Charles had hired two small rooms, in the second story of a ricketty framed-house, which had recommended itself to him because but a single family beside his own occupied it, and that one less degraded than the neighbors generally. His wife, however, did not know, at first, the terrible gulf of poverty and vice into which fate had drawn them. The very night of their arrival she was seized with her pains, and before morning a lovely baby daughter lay on her bosom.

Oh! the bliss of that moment when the mother first feels another heart beating against her own, a little heart that she has just given birth to, and whose every pulsation seems but an echo of hers. What a thrill of delight runs through the throbbing, exhausted nerves as she lifts her languid eyes to the sweet, infantile face, and dimly traces, or thinks she traces, the lineaments of him to whom she plighted her virgin love, and for whom she has willingly endured this great agony, and would bear tortures even more acute. And then what a repose is that which follows, when it is happiness supreme to feel the little one sleeping by her side, when to wake and see the babe is to renew her joy, and to sleep again that she may awake for the same purpose once more, is felicity added to felicity.

Charles, meantime, was seeking employment. Frequently he heard of desirable situations, but he never succeeded in obtaining them, either because he had no recommendations, or because some other more fortunate applicant had just preceded him. Often he almost despaired, and felt as if to plunge into the cold river, and thus give up the struggle, would be a relief. But the fear of that dread hereafter, of which he had been taught by his old master, rose up to warn him back

from suicide. It was well that the great truths of eternity had been so forcibly impressed on him in childhood, for now he rarely heard the name of the Creator except as coupled with blasphemy. His very soul, shuddered, at times, at the abyss of moral ruin which yawned around him. He fled from the quarter often, as from a pest-house, straying for hours through the great, gilded city beyond, the city that had its dozens of missionary agencies for foreign and heathen lands, but no gospel-messenger for the Ishmaelitism within its own borders. But often as he fled, as often he returned in haste, for he dreaded leaving Cora alone, when he reflected on it, in that den of human wolves and tigers.

When he entered that low, close, smoky chamber, all despondency disappeared, for the sight of Cora and his daughter was like morning sunshine to his darkened soul. His heart went out in emotions of gratitude to God. And this, though Charles was not, in any strict sense, a religious man. But who could see that still languid wife, who could watch those little eyes, the very counterparts of his own, without feeling his whole nature thrill with thankful happiness? It would have required not merely an atheist, but one dead to every natural feeling, to have gazed on so much love and innocence unmoved. For Cora's every look showed with what rapturous affection for the father as well as for the child her heart was filled; and every smile of the dear, tiny infant, in which Charles saw himself and Cora by turns, was like a smile from Heaven.

"Oh! Charles," said the fond mother one day, "I am so happy. I never thought I could be half so happy. See what great big round eyes it has, just like your's, Charles, exactly! And what queer, fat

little arms! And a forehead I never see without thinking of you!"

"It's little mouth's the very ditto of your's, Cora, only it hasn't yet got such pretty teeth. Missis used to say there never was such teeth as yours."

A slight shade, but almost as imperceptible as the cloud on the noon-day sun, passed over the countenance of Cora, and she said, "I wish—" But there she stopped abruptly.

Charles had not seen the cloud, for he had been gazing curiously at his daughter, and now looking up, he said smilingly:

"You wish what, Cora?"

She colored, and her eye fell beneath his, as she answered, a little embarrassed,

"Oh! nothing, never mind."

For she recollected the distaste with which he heard regrets after their old home, and the half expressed wish had been that Isabel could see her child, that she might be perfectly happy.

But Charles was not to be put off, and Cora finally had to tell him. He looked displeased for a moment. But no one, who had not a heart of stone, could be really angry, with that still pale face anxiously regarding him. Or, if he could have withstood that, he could not have given way to evil passions, with that little, silent pleader staring, with its eyes wide open, up into his face, as if drinking into its soul, through those visual portals, all that it beheld.

"Have you a place yet?" said Cora at last.

"No, but I am to see about one to-morrow; it is that of a waiter in a private family."

"Will it keep you away of nights?"

"I fear it will."

"Oh! then don't take it," said Cora, shudderingly, "I hear, sometimes, such horrible oaths under my window. You, dearest, are sleeping soundly, and don't notice them, but they make my blood run cold. And this morning, there was a quarrel nearly opposite, in which women's voices, I am sure, were engaged only, until some men interfered; I think police officers from the way they talked, and, as near as I could gather, they carried off some who had been fighting. I had baby asleep on my lap, so that I could not go to the window, and, indeed, I should have been afraid, I think, to go any how. What sort of a house have we got into? Are the people honest, or safe?"

"The people of this house seem good enough," replied Charles, evasively. "And we'll move, love, as soon as I can afford it. I only came here because I had to find you a home, quickly, somewhere, and I had not the means of choice."

"But you won't take any place that compels you to stay away of nights? I shall die of fright, if I'm left alone."

Charles knew that this was no mere mawkish fear. Often he had heard things, when Cora fancied him asleep, that had made his veins curdle. But live they must. He had at last come actually, and not merely figuratively, to his last dollar, and if he did not accept this place his wife and child would soon be starving. His only fear had been that the vacancy might be filled before he could see about it. He had called that day, the very instant he had heard of the situation, but the gentleman was out of town, he was told, and would not return till late at night. It had been his intention to enquire again, the first thing in the morning. He wished to call before any body else could

possibly do so, yet he feared to be there too early Hence he had been in a fever of suspense, until coming in, and seeing Cora and the baby, he had, for awhile, forgotten all his perplexities.

But now they returned, and greater than ever.

"Cora, dear," he said at last, taking her hand, and looking tenderly into her face, "you know I would not leave you alone of nights, if I could help it. But our money is quite gone now, and I must take this place, if I can get it, or see you starve. Besides, even if I was to refuse this, I could not probably obtain a better situation. It is almost the only thing for which I am fitted. Part of the time, I hope, they'll let me come and stay here. You see, honey, there's nothing else to do."

It was all too true, Cora felt, and so she made no further opposition. But her heart went back to those happy days, when the favorite of her young mistress, she had not a care on earth. She thought of the long, dark, lonely winter nights before her, and of the bacchanalian orgies that filled the streets with their hideous noises, and then her imagination pictured the clean, neatly furnished room that was once her own, and Isabel coming in, every evening, to say, "good-night," and admiringly kiss the baby. Some natural tears rose to her eyes, in spite of earnest efforts to check them. But Charles, who felt keenly for her, though he did not know the full extent of her painful emotions, kissed away the tears, and with lavish caresses of herself and baby, made her forget her troubles, for the time.

It was with a beating heart that on the next day, Charles was ushered into the presence of the gentleman wanting a waiter. Never had he felt such anxiety

before. Never had he watched the face of his old master, with a tithe of the eagerness, with which he now studied every change of the one now before him.

He was, however, successful. The place was given to him. The salary, indeed, was less than he had hoped for, but it would keep Cora and the baby from starving, and, in time, he might do better, or Cora might, at odd intervals, snatch leisure to earn a trifle by sewing. He returned, with eager steps, to tell her the good news, and to prepare his scanty wardrobe for removal the next day.

"I am to have one evening a week to myself," he said, "besides every other Sunday. So you'll not be entirely alone."

Poor Cora! She had hoped for more, and her heart rose in her throat. But she tried to smile, tried to be cheerful like her husband, tried to push away from her thoughts the image of those long dark nights.

To a certain extent she succeeded. Baby was more interesting than ever that day, seemed to take more notice, and as Charles said really looked as if it knew him. Cora had believed, for many a day, that it knew her. So they kissed it, and looked at it lovingly, and were as happy as you or I, reader—for the time.

But when Charles had really moved away, when the whole day passed without her seeing him, then Cora's sorrows began anew. When winter set in, and the streets becoming almost impassable with snow, half a week would elapse without a visit from him, her sufferings became intolerable. She was still nervous from her late illness, want of exercise and the unwholesome air preventing her gaining strength, and this added to

the anguish of her suspense. During the day she managed to quiet her apprehensions. Baby was then awake, and would lure her from herself, with its innocent wiles. Yet even in the broad glare of noon, and when the winter sun would be shining dazzlingly in her window, there would sometimes come a sudden shriek, or curse, or drunken howl, from the street below, that would make her heart leap like a deer frightened from its lair by the shot of the hunter. It was as night deepened, however, that her alarm increased. When the shadows began to thicken in her chamber, her heated imagination would people the corners with vague shapes, which would gradually assume the outlines of hideous faces, such as she saw sometimes from her window, brutal faces, leering faces, mocking faces, faces of human fiends, faces of hanged murderers returned to earth. Often these airy visions would be so life-like, seem to approach so near, that she would catch her sleeping baby and start up with a cry. Then the illusion would disappear. But as the night deepened, and the hour for retiring came, the whole quarter seemed to awake to full vitality and to riot in uproar and profanity. Drunken men were heard reeling home, crunching on the snow, tumbling up against the side of the house, and cursing the companions who, being less inebriated, endeavored to coax them away. Or degraded females, that Cora felt would be loathsome to look at, were heard calling to the other sex, in words that made the listener shrink, and hide her head, for the modesty of woman thus foully outraged. Sometimes the noise of dancing would be heard, from some neighboring house, mingled with laughter, blasphemy, and contention, and the din deepening as the night wore on, the uproar would

rise at last to such a pitch, that the police would interpose. The watchman's rattle would then join its shrill alarm to the other discordant noises; the dull sound of blows would frequently be heard; shrieks, yells, curses, howls of rage, maudlin prayers for mercy, and maudlin promises of amendment would follow, and finally, though not till long after midnight, the tread of hurried, yet reluctant footsteps beneath the window, would tell Cora that the whole company of revellers had been captured at one swoop, and would, in the morning, attract a crowd at the police station, to see the culprits brought up to justice, some with garments half torn away, some with bloody faces, and some with eyes swelled hideously into temporary blindness. Oh! what a Pandemonium all this was to Cora.

Once, on a still winter night, so bitterly cold that not a dog was heard to howl, and when the night-watch, instead of patrolling the streets, huddled around the stove at the station-house lest they should freeze out of doors, a couple of drunken men, either mistaking Cora's house for another, or thinking that all doors were alike infamous in that horrible quarter, knocked, about midnight, for admittance. The people who occupied the lower rooms, happened, for that once, to be absent, so that poor Cora was entirely alone. Terror paralyzed her entirely. She could not move. All she could do was to hug her baby to her bosom, shrink to the further corner of the bed, and pray silently to God for succor. She knew that, even if she could get to the window, no watchmen would be within call, and that, if the neighbors heard her, they would, so far from interfering, only mock at her terrors. Receiving no answer to their summons, the men became

enraged. They beat the door with feet and hands, till the whole house shook, Cora expecting every moment to hear the frail defence crash inwards. They swore oaths frightfully loud and blasphemous. One of them, at last, finding entrance so perseveringly denied, vowed he would storm the windows of the second story, and murder the inmates; and mounting on the shoulders of his comrade, actually attempted to reach the sill of the one by Cora's bed. The agony of that period who shall describe? Cora had, by this time, discovered how lawless was the population of this quarter, and knew that these threats were not mere idle boasts. Her heart seemed, for a while, during the moment of most intense suspense, actually to cease its pulsations. Silently she committed her soul to God, expecting the next minute would be her last. Yet, even in that instant of awful terror, she thought of her infant before herself, and moving it behind her, half turned towards the casement, to receive the blow first, and thus save her child.

But, fortunately, the ruffian could not quite reach the sill, and making a second attempt, over-reached himself, and fell headlong to the ground. Too much hurt to renew the attempt, he was dragged off by his companion, their horrid imprecations dying in the distance, like the muttering of baffled fiends.

CHAPTER XII.

ROSA'S WEDDING.

THERE was quite an excitement on Mr. Clifford's and some of the neighboring plantations. Rosa's dancing, on the memorable day of the *fete*, had made such an impression on the heart of the susceptible Cæsar, that he determined at once to secure so great a prize for himself.

And now the morning of the wedding-day had come. The ceremony was to be performed by a real minister, in the dining room of the house, which was afterwards to be cleared for dancing; for Rosa was a favorite with Mrs. Clifford, who took pleasure in gratifying the girl's whim to have every thing as grand as possible. Rosa had already decided in her own mind, how she would surprise all the guests by unparalleled agility, when Cæsar entered the kitchen, where she was assisting Aunt Vi'let.

"Mornin', Cæsar," said Aunt Vi'let. "I hopes yer well on dis suspicious day."

Rosa said nothing, but only looked coquettishly at her lover.

"Berry well in body," replied Cæsar, "but not so well in mind."

Rosa kindled up on the instant. "Well, Mr. Cæsar," she said, "all I'se got ter say is, dat if yer tinks yer 'fections replaced, I'se don't care. Dar plenty niggers dance better 'n yer any day."

Cæsar looked at his lady-love in astonishment and affright, his huge eyes wider open than ever, his mouth staring.

"I'se don't 'gret my love fer yer, Rosa, 't all, 'deed I don't," he said earnestly. "De good Lord knows it. But dar's dat nigger 'Tony went an' tuk sick, jist 'kase we wanted him ter play at der weddin'."

It was Rosa's turn now to look affrighted. She dropped her fork and sunk upon her seat. To have a wedding, and not to dance, was, to her idea, like the tragedy of Hamlet with Hamlet left out. To dance without 'Tony to fiddle was utterly impossible. Her glory had departed. She began almost to wish she was not going to be married.

But suddenly a hope dawned upon her. Like all her sex Rosa was fertile in expedients.

"I reckon he is on'y playin' 'possum, after all," she said, jumping up. "He don't want to work ter day, or he's 'fended at somethin'. I'se gwine to coax him."

But Cæsar shook his head.

"Dat ain't it, Rosa," he said. "He says he is berry ill. He hasn't smoked his pipe ter day. He says he is gwine ter git 'Bides to tell mas'er Clifford he muss' hab de doctor."

Rosa was in despair again. In her whole life so great a misfortune had never threatened her before. The vision of the big dining room brilliantly lighted up, and the white dress, of which she had been dreaming for a week, faded from her imagination, and left only a blank void behind. But now Aunt Vi'let came to her relief. The good dame had rather a contempt for 'Tony, and plainly told the lovers that he only wanted "ter hab a fuss made wid him."

"Yer go yerself, Rosa," she said. "And here's some 'lasses," she continued, pouring out a cup full, "he is berry fond of 'lasses, der lazy good-for-nothin' nigger."

As Rosa approached the cabin of 'Tony, she saw him through the open door, leaning his head, which was bound up with a handkerchief, against the wall. She was debating how to attack the fortress, when she caught a sight of his three children. Two of this promising progeny were regaling themselves with a roll in the dirt before the entrance. But the third stood right in the door-way, in all the dignity of a pair of Mr. Clifford's cast-off boots, which came quite up to the urchin's thighs, and a dirty cotton shirt, evidently highly gratified with his imposing attire. At Rosa's appearance the two turning somersets rose, and all three stared at her, for though they saw her every day, she was now invested, as the bride of the evening, with a new dignity in their eyes. Victoria edged off towards the fence, where she stood making snakes on the ground with her great toe, while Alcibiades, corrupted into plain 'Bides, stood in open-mouthed wonder, grinning from ear to ear. As for the young gentleman in the boots and shirt, being rather modest, he hid himself partially behind a bit of his garment, whence he peeped securely at the visiter.

"Dem's el'gant boots, Scipio," she said, her plan of attack being at once matured. "'Spose yer got 'em ter dance at my weddin' ter night."

Alcibiades, at the bare idea of Scipio dancing at Rosa's wedding, burst into hysterics of laughter, and began to roll on the grass, and kick up his

heels, as if the contemplation had quite unsettled his faculties.

"Yes," said Rosa, well knowing that 'Tony was within hearing, "Victoree, 'Bides, an' yer are all ter cum. I'se had de best place at der winder, on de porch, kept for yer."

At this Alcibiades sprang to his feet, picked up a handful of dirt, and flung it at Victoria in the exuberance of his joy.

Discharging this adroit bomb-shell thus into the heart of the garrison, Rosa pushed by Scipio and entered, to carry the citadel itself by assault.

"Oh! 'Tony," she began, "how is yer?"

'Tony threw up his eyes, gave his head a roll against the wall, and heaved a sigh like a young earthquake, but made no other answer.

"I'se heerd yer berry sick," continued Rosa, "so I'se brought some 'lasses down."

Now Tony had been already half subdued by the civilities to his children. If he had a weakness, it was liking molasses and water. He lifted his head from the wall and said,

"'Lasses berry good, Rosa. 'Pears to me I'd feel better ef I had some. But dis 'disposition of mine berry bad. Oh! Rosa, yer don't know, I'se such a misery in de breast." And he put both hands on his chest.

"Dis will cure yer, sartin sure, 'Tony. Blessed Lord, what will we do, ef yer don't play de fiddle fur us ter night. Dar can't be no dancin' 'cept yer dar ter put de dance into our feet."

"Dat a fac'," said 'Tony, yielding to Rosa's diplomacy, and brightening up wonderfully. "An' 'twould

be a pity, deed it would, not to see yer dancin', Rosa, de cemetery of yer figure so perfect."

"Aunt Vi'let," said Rosa, delivering her final Paix-han, "was gwine ter make sich a cake, 'Tony, jist fer yer; all suger at der top, as dey hab 'em at de grandimost weddins 'mong white folks; but she says dat now 't's no use ter waste der good tings, 'kase der no one else desarves sich."

'Tony fairly succumbed to this final and dexterous assault. He raised himself up, and looking authoritatively around, said, addressing his wife, who was putting away the table,

"Here, ole woman, what yer 'bout? I'se been 'most dyin' all de mornin', wid de misery in de breast, an' had to wait on mysel'. 'Spec ef I die, some day, t'll be bekase yer too lazy ter wait on me."

The wife came hastily forward.

"Take de cup," said 'Tony, with the air of an Eastern despot, "an' mix some water wid de 'lasses. Here's Rosa been waitin' dis hour for yer to gib me dis panorama med'cine."

The draught was prepared, meekly offered by the wife, and gulphed down by 'Tony almost at a swallow. After which, declaring he felt much better, he looked with more benignity on his helpmate, and said patronizingly,

"Mariar, yer may gib me my pipe. Dat is if Rosa don't perject to de smoke. Some young ladies, I'se heerd, complain dat it infect de olufactories."

"Oh! no," cried Rosa, almost ready to dance then and there, her joy being so great at this miraculous cure, "I'se quite delighted wid de perfumery of tobacco."

Just then Alcibiades made his appearance within the

cabin, cutting a pigeon-wing, and exclaiming, "Mammy, I'se gwine to de weddin', Rosa says so, an' I'se gwine ter dance as daddy plays."

"Is yer?" said 'Tony, making a dart at the urchin, and exhibiting such wonderful agility in so doing, that Rosa felt satisfied he would be as well as ever by evening. "Is yer? I'll see 'bout dat, yer little nigger."

But the activity of Alcibiades was more than a match for his parent. The boy, giving a dive and a dodge, eluded his father, and, with a whoop, was once more tumbling in the dirt.

"You may 'pend on dis chile," said 'Tony, as he began to smoke, Rosa herself offering him the light. "When I'se done dis, I'll go ter bed, an' let d'ole woman tuck me in, an' dat'll finish de sumptuosity of de cure, I reckon."

Rosa played the privileged bride to perfection. Her head-dress was a miracle of bright red and bright blue ribands, huge white beads, and old artificial flowers. Her white frock was garnished with a crimson sash, and a blue and yellow neck tie; and did not descend so low but that it fully revealed the beauties of a pair of open-work cotton stockings, and new morocco shoes. Cæsar was attired in his best also, but made no approaches to this magnificence. There were no less than three bridesmaids, Rosa having remembered to have heard Isabel describe a wedding, at the North, where there was that number of fair assistants. A bosom-friend of Cæsar's had the important duty of introducing the company, for the whole affair was conducted, as Rosa had declared it should be, "in de very fust style." Mr. and Mrs. Clifford were present during the ceremony, and re-

mained watching the sports for a while subsequently, when they withdrew with the minister.

'Tony, fully recovered from his indisposition, was in full flower, and never acquitted himself, as he subsequently acknowledged, so much to his "satisfraction." Rosa danced, till between admiring his own playing, and the "cemetery" of her figure, 'Tony was in the seventh heaven of felicity, and did not, as he vowed again and again, envy the President himself.

It was, in short, a festival long afterwards remembered. Rarely, in higher circles, has there ever been equal enjoyment, on a similar occasion. For when the restraint, imposed by the presence of the minister, had been taken away, the mirth grew "fast and furious," just such, in fact, as the boisterous, hearty natures of the guests approved.

Ye who never having crossed the Potomac, regard the slave as a haggard, emaciated, broken-hearted victim! go to a negro wedding, in old Virginia, and learn how grievously you have been disappointed. See the happy faces, the very *abandon* of merriment there, and sigh to think that, in your Northern cities, there exists nothing so genial.

CHAPTER XIII.

LITTLE ALFRED.

It was a sultry August morning; such a morning as only August can bring; when you feel the intensity of the sun's rays, without a ray being seen;

when the heavy fog closes around and above you, surging up the hill-sides, and rolling across the valley like the billows of a mist-ocean; and when the damp hair clings to the clammy brow, and the breath comes hard and pantingly.

"Mamma," said Isabel, "I'm afraid I shall have to trouble you with Alfred to-day. He doesn't seem very well."

Mrs. Courtenay turned pale with alarm.

"What's the matter?" she said anxiously. "He seemed well enough yesterday. He was playing about."

"I hope it is nothing," answered Isabel. "But he hasn't been used to going out in these morning fogs, or taking such long walks back in the heat of the day, and I fear it has been too much for the dear little fellow, and that he has caught the fall fever."

Isabel, to relieve her mother, had taken Alfred to sleep with her, ever since their reduced fortunes; and she had noticed a restlessness, and some fever the preceding night. He had, however, fallen into a deep slumber about day-break, and was still asleep.

"Oh! I hope not. If he *should* get sick," said Mrs. Courtenay, clasping her hands. "Do come home early, Isabel."

Isabel needed no incentive to return early. A tormenting anxiety attended her all day. She hurried through her duties as rapidly as she could, and reached the cottage half an hour earlier than usual.

Mrs. Courtenay met her with an anxious face. Alfred, she said, was sleeping now, but had been very fretful all day, and continually asked for his sister. Isabel hastened to his chamber, just in time to see him wake.

"Come, pet," she said, thinking the fresh air might do him good, "won't you get up and take a walk? I think I saw Uncle Peter go down to the store in his big wagon. Suppose we go there too, and we'll buy a whip."

The little fellow seemed at first delighted, for the simplest toy was now a treasure to him. But, after he had gone a few steps, he complained of being tired.

Isabel took him up, with a sinking heart. She strove to cheat herself and him, however, by telling him stories, in hopes to brighten him up. But Alfred listened languidly, and did not laugh as usual. At last she said:

"Now, Alfred, get down and try to catch that butterfly. See, isn't it beautiful?"

"I don't want to," feebly said the little fellow, "I would rather go home. I'm so cold, sister."

So Isabel took him home again, for she was now thoroughly alarmed.

She laid him carefully on the bed, covered him up as he desired, and after administering some medicine, which she recollected to be good for fever, slipped down to ask her mother if it would not be advisable to send for a physician.

"Do you think him so ill as that?" queried Mrs. Courtenay, terribly alarmed; "what shall we do? We can't get Doctor Worthington here to-night, it is over twelve miles there, and we have no one to send."

"No, mamma, *he* is not to be thought of, but there is a physician who lives at the upper end of the village, and as it is not dark yet, if you will go for him, I will stay with Alfred," replied the daughter, knowing that to her mother's temperament,

the actual duty would be far preferable to the silent watching.

Mrs. Courtenay took her bonnet and started with haste, while Isabel resumed her post by the bedside of the child. But the physician was from home, and to be absent several days. Mrs. Courtenay returned in tears.

No supper was wanted that night by the two poor watchers. The mother wept till she was nearly faint, proposing impossible things, then sinking down into her rocking chair to weep again, while Isabel sat with moist but watchful eyes by the bedside, holding a hot little hand, and looking into the gathering darkness of the future, through the gathering darkness of the night, with hopes sinking as the hours ebbed on, and wild prayers for help, and the despairing feeling sweeping over her that the world passed on and cared nought for her trouble—that God himself had almost forsaken her.

How slowly the time passed. The hands of the time-piece crept snail-like on. It was only ten o'clock. How many weary, weary hours yet, before day again.

Isabel put on a loose wrapper and resumed her seat by the bed, after having persuaded her mother to retire. But Mrs. Courtenay came into the room every fifteen or twenty minutes to see if there was any new symptom, and to wish it was day, "it was so much harder to have sickness at night," she said, till at last, wearied out with anxiety and fatigue, she sank into a deep sleep.

In the sick room, the dim light in the chimney threw out large spectral shadows, flickering and dying, then starting up again on the wall, as a breath

of air fanned the flame; the white muslin curtains at the window rose and fell, and rose and fell again, making a gasping sound in the night breeze; and outside a lamenting whip-poor-will sat in a tree, prophesying ominous things to the watcher.

But the steady sleep of the boy at length began to affect Isabel, and spectral shadows, and fluttering curtains, and the ill omened bird were nearly buried in oblivion, when the sick boy moaned restlessly, and cried,

"I want to go home, take me home."

Every faculty of the sister was now wide awake.

"You are at home, darling," said she coaxingly, raising the bright curly head, and turning the pillow.

The great blue eyes were wide open now, looking larger and bluer than ever, and sparkling with fever.

"I want to go home to Isabel and mamma, take me home," cried the child again, putting his arms up toward his sister.

Isabel had never seen delirium before, and her heart almost stood still with fear, although she said, calmly,

"Alfred, dear, you are at home, and this is Isabel. Don't you know her?"

The child turned away with a dissatisfied look, and called again for her. She took him up in her arms, and laid him on the side of the bed where it was cool, and stroked his little hand, and played with his curls, and talked and soothed and coaxed, but it was still evident that her brother did not know her.

And now the boy babbled on, of birds and flowers, and of his dead father, and absent brother, and then he would sink into an uneasy slumber, again to waken and call for Isabel.

At last the grey dawn of the coming morning began

to struggle with the dying light within the chamber. It was a great relief to the wearied sister, who thought that long night would never end.

Alfred slept again, and Isabel stepped noiselessly about the little room, quietly arranging it, till her mother entered.

Mrs. Courtenay took her post by the bedside, and insisted upon her daughter retiring for some rest herself, but Isabel resolutely refused, saying she had her household duties to attend to, before going to school.

"Why, Isabel, you surely don't think of leaving this child, sick as he is?" asked the mother.

Isabel, nervous from fatigue and anxiety, replied with a quivering lip,

"Indeed, mamma, I must go. I hope Alfred is better now, and you know we have no resource but the school."

"I don't want you to give up the school altogether, but I should think you *could not* go, while your brother is so sick. How am I to get along through the day, too? My terrible anxiety unfits me for nursing."

But Isabel replied more firmly, "Mother, I *must* go, as long as Alfred is not too ill. If the parents of the children become dissatisfied, I shall have to give up the school, and we must starve. I hope Alfred is better, he was very delirious in the night, but seems to be sleeping more quietly now."

Mrs. Courtenay said no more, but she was absolutely frightened at being left alone with the sick boy.

But oh! the weary, weary day, to the absent sister. It seemed as long as the night had done. The suspense, at times, was almost unbearable, and she

would rise from her seat, and pace the floor of the school-room, as she heard the recitations.

At last it was over, and Isabel was hurrying home, when she met Uncle Peter in the farm wagon, with his elbows on his knees as usual, every now and then snapping the flies off Jerry's back with the reins.

"De Lord bless yer, missis, what de matter?" asked he, suddenly stopping, on seeing Isabel's anxious face.

"I'm in a great hurry, Uncle Peter, little Alfred is very ill," was the reply.

"Little Mas'r Alfred! What de doctor say de matter, missis?"

"It is a dreadful fever, but we can't get a doctor," and Isabel waited to say no more.

"Oh, poor honey! how dre'ful hard she take it,—and ole missus too, and dey havn't got not a nigger to get a doctor for 'em, even," soliloquised Uncle Peter. "Well," continued he, as Jerry received another jerk to hurry him on, "Mas'r Clifford ain't so over linniment to niggers, nor poor white folks, nuther; but if he 'll only jis let Uncle Peter have dis ole poke of a hoss, after work's done, dat good Doctor Worthington 'll see dat dear baby, de night, dis nigger knows."

Isabel reached home to find her mother crying and wringing her hands over Alfred, who was again delirious, after having awakened from what she thought a good sleep.

"How is he?" was Isabel's hurried question.

"Oh! Isabel, Isabel, I'm so glad to see you've come. Do you think him any better than he was this morning?"

"I am afraid not, dear mother. This fever is

frightful," but the speaker's face brightened a little, as she exclaimed,

"Mamma, I've heard Aunt Vi'let say that plantain leaves were good bruised, and put on the wrists and feet in fever,—there are plenty in the yard," and away she hastened to obtain them.

She came up stairs, clapping the leaves between her hands, before binding them around the little feet and delicate wrists with handkerchiefs. Then the pillows were shaken, and the bed smoothed, and Isabel sat down to watch.

The raving at length ceased. Then came several hours of uninterrupted sleep.

Mrs. Courtenay had thrown herself on the foot of the bed, and slept also, and Isabel was beginning to feel hopeful that her remedy had been efficacious, when she placed her hand on the child's wrist. She was startled at the icy coldness of the little arm up to the elbow; the feet and legs had the same death-like feeling; but the stomach and head were burning hot.

"Mamma, mamma," said she, in a hoarse whisper, laying her hand on her mother, "Alfred is dreadfully ill. I'm afraid he is —," she was going to say "dying," but restraining herself, she added, "You watch him, and I'll see, if, for the love of God, one of the neighbors won't go for Doctor Worthington."

As she spoke she rushed down stairs, and out into the darkness of the night.

"What the devil 's the matter?" said the gruff voice of a man, who was tying a horse to a tree near the door, as Isabel nearly stumbled over him.

"Oh, doctor, doctor, is that you?" she cried, with eagerness. "Come with me! Alfred is dying," and without waiting for more, Isabel hurried back to the house.

"I beg your pardon, Miss Courtenay, but I didn't know you. What's the matter with Alfred though?" asked the doctor, as he followed her up stairs.

Isabel did not reply, but watched the physician's face keenly, as he felt the pulse of the boy.

She was frightened at its grave expression, and said in a low whisper, "Is he dying, doctor?"

Dr. Worthington shook his head as he answered, "No, but I can give you small hope; he had a good constitution and *may* recover, though there's but little chance."

Mrs. Courtenay at this gave a fearful shriek, that ended in a fit of hysterics, from which it took her daughter nearly an hour to recover her.

The doctor, in the meanwhile, had administered his remedies, and saying to Isabel that he must have his horse put up at the tavern, as he should stay all night, left the room.

"Why in the name of mischief didn't you send for me before?" asked the good man, half petulantly, when he returned.

"I had no one to send, doctor, and the physician who lives here was not at home. I was just going to see if one of the neighbors would not go for you as I met you. But," continued she, as the strangeness of the doctor's being so far from home, at that late hour, just struck her, "how did you happen to be so near here when I met you?"

"Why Uncle Peter came for me,—didn't you send him?"

Isabel burst into tears as she exclaimed,

"Thank God we are not entirely friendless."

"I should think not," said the doctor gruffly, to conceal his emotion. "But now, my dear child," he continued, "persuade your mother to go to bed. Then

you come lie down here, and get some rest yourself; for you will have all the nursing to do to-morrow, as I must leave early in the morning, though I shall be back again before night."

"But the school," said Isabel.

"D—n the school," he answered angrily. But in a moment he said, "I'll take care of that. I'll go and see the parents, and threaten that if they don't give you a holiday without a fuss, while your brother is so ill, that the first chance I get, I'll kill their children with calomel. You shan't kill yourself,—besides you're wanted at home."

And Isabel, wearied out in body and mind, gave up all care of her little brother to the doctor, and slept uninterruptedly till morning. It seemed to her, indeed, that had she been told Alfred was dying, she could not have aroused herself from that lethargic sleep.

But Alfred grew more and more ill. His big blue eyes were open, but fixed on vacancy; the head, with its beautiful golden curls, from which the fever had taken all the glossiness, tossed from side to side; the little hand kept clutching at the ear; the limbs were drawn up convulsively; and all this without a moan: he heard nothing, saw nothing, felt nothing.

Doctor Worthington was unremitting in his attentions, but at every visit, there seemed to be, if possible, less room for hope.

"It's the brain, my child, the brain, I'm afraid," said he, one morning, to Isabel. "There's that devilish sordes, too, around the teeth; and not the slightest particle of moisture about the nostril, or lip."

And so, day after day, the sister watched the child, often burying her face in the pillow to stifle the

moan, which would rise to her lips; giving the medicines with the greatest precision; comforting her heart-broken mother, who was nearly as helpless as Alfred himself; not feeling the fatigue now, but looking with terrible anxiety for the symptoms, which the doctor had told her she might consider favorable.

One afternoon, after Aunt Vi'let had finished her washing, she persuaded Isabel to lie down, while she took her post by the bed-side. Mrs. Courtenay had fallen asleep in her rocking-chair, and Isabel, throwing herself on the foot of the bed, soon fell into a half conscious doze.

Presently, as though in a dream, she heard Aunt Vi'let mutter,

"Oh good Lord! he's gone,"—then louder, "Missis!"

Isabel started to her feet, her face blanching with terror, but put her finger to her lip, as she motioned toward her mother, though her own heart stood still with fear. She took the boy's wrist between her fingers, and felt no pulse. The little chest heaved not; yet with frightful calmness she gave the medicine, which it was now time for him to take, forcing it between the closed teeth.

Aunt Vi'let remonstrated.

"It's of no use a plaguing him, honey."

But Isabel's fingers were again on the wrist, and she thought she could discern a fine thread-like pulse, fluttering and uncertain, but still a motion.

"Turn the clothes down, on the other side, Aunt Vi'let," whispered she.

Aunt Vi'let shook her head again.

"It'll do no good honey, 'deed it won't. Let me lift him," continued she, as she saw Isabel was determined upon the change.

But Isabel refused.

"It will be the last time, I can do any thing for him, perhaps. I shall carry him myself." And she took the little form in her arms, and laid him down gently on the other side of the bed.

And now her anxiety became fearful. She thought the pulse more regular than it had been, and as she stooped to adjust the pillow, she noticed that the nostril was less dry, and fancied there was a slight moisture on the lip. Then came the reaction. Leaning her head on the bed, she burst into tears, the first during all that weary watching, murmuring,

"He'll get well! I know he'll get well."

Aunt Vi'let replied, as she watched her young mistress with compassion,

"Yes, honey, I tink he will too;" though she said to herself, "before dis night over, he'll be an angel in Heaven."

And now Isabel awaited Doctor Worthington's arrival with more anxiety, if possible, than ever. She would not let the new-born hope die. She almost cried again for joy, when the doctor said that the symptoms were all favorable, though the child was not at all out of danger. For even this slight encouragement seemed assurance of recovery to Isabel.

The next morning, during the doctor's visit, as Isabel passed the foot of the bed, the good man exclaimed joyfully,

"Isabel, Isabel, go back again, I think his eyes followed you, I think he knows you."

But the second trial was so undecided, that their hopes fell again.

The doctor glanced around the room.

"I wish," said he, "that we had something very bright to see if it would attract his attention."

Isabel darted down stairs, and returned immediately with a fan, composed of feathers of the gayest hues. This had always been a favorite with the child. It was now passed and repassed before his face, at first with no apparent success. But finally, as it approached the eye, the pupil contracted. The glance followed it, slightly to be sure, but still followed it, as it was removed from side to side.

Isabel had been holding her breath in suspense, but when she went to take the fan entirely away, and the little head made an effort to look after her, she gave a scream, and fell on the bed, hysterically weeping.

From that time Alfred's recovery decidedly commenced, though the doctor still felt anxious, fearing his strength would not carry him through.

But the convalescence was more trying for his sister than the illness had been. The child was as helpless as an infant. He could neither walk, talk, nor raise his hand to his head; but if she left him for a moment, a piteous, feeble wail would recall her immediately to his side. He was restless too, beyond conception. If she sat down with him in the chamber, he would stretch out his emaciated little arms to go down stairs, and before she could reach the bottom, he would cry to be carried up again.

Isabel's strength nearly failed at times, but her patience never. When, at the end of a month, she resumed her duties at school, and Mrs. Courtenay took her place as nurse, her health had become so enfeebled as to render her almost unfit for her old occupation.

When Dr. Worthington reached home, after his last visit to Alfred, he flung himself into a chair, and said,

"That peril is over at last, and a narrower escape was never made. It all came too, by his having to go with Isabel, daily, to school, through the fog and dew. Ah! this poverty."

"And so little Alfred is really well," said his wife.

"Yes, he'll do now," replied the doctor. And looking into Mrs. Worthington's mild face, he continued. "Do you know what I've been thinking of, Molly, all the way home?"

"I can't even guess," said she, smiling.

"Well, some kind friend at the North," said the doctor, pulling out a newspaper, "has sent me a long article on the cruel treatment of slaves, the suffering they endure from being separated, and all that. I got it from the post-office to-day. And I've been thinking that if Alfred had been some slave child and had fallen sick in exactly the same circumstances, we should never have heard the end of it. But because he is white, by Jupiter, there'll be no sympathy for him. I sometimes wish, when I see things like this, or am over-worked myself, that we were all niggers. The Lord knows, a black skin, in these nineteenth century days, is quite a blessing."

CHAPTER XIV.

ISABEL'S WINTER.

THE autumn passed. Winter came. Day by day the anxieties, privations, and ill-health of Isabel increased. She had now almost incessant headaches. Sometimes she would be shivering with chills, and soon after burned up with fever. She caught frequent colds, until her mother, wringing her hands, declared that "her dear daughter, her only stay, was going to die of consumption."

Mrs. Courtenay was still as delicate in health as ever, and though willing to do, still utterly incompetent. Characters like hers, accustomed for a long life to luxurious indolence, cannot adapt themselves to a change of circumstances. It was just as difficult for her, after months of poverty, to dress herself: it was just as exhausting to her to have to look after Alfred: it was just as impossible for her to perform any but the lightest household work, as it had been in the first week. Yet no one lamented her own incapacity more, when once she realized it. But she could not, even after all their privations, fully understand their condition. Utter poverty, such as was now coming upon them, was a thing incomprehensible to her: she had never experienced it in person, she had never known any body that had; and therefore, she could not believe in its possibility, but, with secret reservation, felt convinced that something would happen to

avert it. Isabel, mean time, endeavored to spare her mother the feeling of actual want, often denying herself that Mrs. Courtenay and Alfred might have sufficient. She kept also the real state of their finances concealed.

"Oh! dear me," said Mrs. Courtenay, one day, when they sat down to dinner, "bacon again. Why don't you get poultry, Isabel? Really my appetite can't take this plain fare all the time. And there's Alfred, too. I'm sure he would like a nice bit of fowl, wouldn't you, darling?"

Alfred looked at Isabel, and answered, crossly, for he was yet irritable from his late sickness.

"Yes, Alfred thinks sister Isabel naughty, because she won't give him chicken like she used to. He can't eat that nasty stuff, and he won't."

"My dear child," interposed the mother, now regretting that she had spoken on the subject, "it can't be helped to-day, but, to-morrow, sister will have a nice fowl for you."

Isabel made no answer. With difficulty she kept the tears from gushing forth. After all her cares, after her many secret privations, to be thus reproached, was more almost than she could bear. She gulped down her anguish and silently prayed for strength. God heard the petition. At once she reflected that her mother had not meant to censure her, and that her little brother knew not what she did, and her unutterable sorrow passed away.

Yet what should she do? To gratify her mother's wishes was impossible. Isabel had made, the day before, a calculation of their inevitable expenses through the winter months, and had estimated the reliable means she would have to meet them. The result had

terrified her. She found that, after practising the most rigid economy, and limiting themselves to the positive necessaries of life, there would still be a deficiency before spring. The idea of debt was terrible to her. Yet she saw no way to avoid it eventually.

How could she, therefore, gratify her mother in this thing? Yet it was almost equally impossible to tell Mrs. Courtenay the truth. For Isabel knew that the wish was not the result of a mere whim, but that her mother's delicate, and long pampered appetite, actually loathed sometimes the coarse fare they were compelled to live upon.

Oh! ye who from the cradle to the grave daily command whatever the palate may desire, or ye who from always filling a lowly lot have never acquired factitious tastes, little do ye know how difficult it is to endure privations such as were now the lot of this orphaned family. Only one of the three, indeed, could bear her cross without complaint, nor was she enabled to do it till after many a struggle, and many a prayer for help.

That night Isabel lay awake, for hours, thinking and planning, but in vain. A dozen times she resolved to gratify her mother and Alfred. "It's but a trifle," affection whispered. But prudence answered, "Yet how is that trifle to be replaced!" Now that she was alone she wept unrestrainedly. At last, near midnight, and just as she was sinking into a disturbed slumber, she thought she heard a noise in the little out-kitchen as if some one was opening its window. She started up in bed and listened. But the sound was not repeated, and concluding that she had been dreaming, she lay down again and gradually fell into that deep, leth-

argic sleep that often succeeds periods of sorrow or mental excitement.

But Isabel's first impression had been the correct one. Some one had been at the window of the out-kitchen; but to explain who we must go back a little.

Aunt Vi'let had been over, that morning, to do the ironing, and had not yet left when the conversation we have described took place, though both Mrs. Courtenay and Isabel supposed her gone. Consequently she overheard every word that had been said.

On going home she was sad and thoughtful to such an extent, that Uncle Peter, when he came into supper, asked her what was the matter.

"Poor ole missis," was her answer, "an' Miss Is'bel, dey gwine ter starve ter death dis winter. Ole missis she can't eat de bacon, an' dey's no money ter buy chickens, or nice tings. I heerd Miss Is'bel gib a great sob, an' den swallow it quick, dat missis mightn't know it, an' my ole heart a'most broke, deed it did."

Aunt Vi'let, as she concluded, was so much affected that she burst into tears. The eye-sight even of Uncle Peter grew dim, for perhaps no spectacle, in the world, could have been more pathetic to his honest heart.

There was silence for a minute or two. Once or twice Aunt Vi'let attempted to speak, but her voice broke down, and she continued to weep aloud. Uncle Peter pushed the food away untasted.

At last he spoke.

"I'se tell you what, Vi'let," he said, "de Lord has sent dis 'spensation on dem, dat we might gib our widow's mite. Dar's de fowls dat yer'se been savin' up to sell at Chris'mas. 'Spose we take an' send 'em

to Miss Is'bel. Yet to tink dat dar should be no one but de poor slave to keep his ole missis from starvin'." And, at this picture, Uncle Peter broke down also, lifting up his voice and weeping aloud.

"Oh! my blessed Lord," wept and ejaculated Aunt Vi'let, rocking herself to and fro, "oh! Lord, dat ebber it should a come ter dis."

After awhile Uncle Peter spoke.

"Yer take an' cotch two of de chickens, ole woman," he said, "an' I'll twist der necks off 'mediately. When de moon's up, by'm'by, I'll tote 'em to de house, an' leave 'em in de out-kitchen. I can open de winder widout bein' heard. It'll nebber do to let ole missis know whar dey came from. Dat would be worse trouble of all."

How few, in higher circles, would have shown the delicacy of the old slave!

Thus it was that, at midnight, Isabel heard the shutter of the out-kitchen open. And thus also it was that, in the morning, she found lying on the sill inside, a pair of fowls.

She started in amazement. Had they dropped visibly from heaven, she could not have felt more intensely that the hand of Providence was in all this. As yet she had no suspicions of the source from whence the timely succor came.

"How deliciously it looks," said Mrs. Courtenay, as they sat down to dinner. "I told you, Alfred, that sister would have a nice chicken to-day."

"You are a good sister," cried the lad impetuously, throwing his arms around Isabel, and kissing her, "and not a naughty one, as I said yesterday. There, don't cry, sister. Ma, what's sister crying about?"

For Isabel, partly from nervousness, partly from

joy, was shedding big, silent tears, that rolled down her cheeks, and dropped heavily on the boy's face as he looked up into her's.

"My dear child," said Mrs. Courtenay, addressing Isabel, "are you sick?"

"No, no," hastily replied Isabel, wiping away the tears. "It's gone now. I was only nervous."

"Are you sure? Well then, my love, carve the chicken, for Alfred, you see, is getting impatient; and really I don't know when I've been so eager myself to begin."

Not for many a day had a meal been eaten in that house which every one enjoyed so heartily. Isabel's pleasure in seeing her mother and Alfred we cannot find words to describe. You must be reduced to poverty yourself, reader—which God grant you never may—before you can realize the delight of beholding those you love, once more have a feast something like old times. Could Uncle Peter and his wife have seen how their gift was enjoyed, they would have cried for very joy. But they were amply repaid even by the news which Aunt Vi'let, who had gone over to visit her old mistress that afternoon, brought back.

"Sakes alive," she said, laughing, yet half ready to cry, "how dey must a eat. I looked whar dey keep de cold victuals, but dar wasn't a bit left, not so much as a bone. Ah! ole man, when I sees how missis suffers, 'pears to me we ain't thankful 'nuff for de prelvidges we has."

It was not the last time that Uncle Peter assisted his former mistress. Often, during that long winter, his provident hand provided some delicacy for the inmates of the cottage: but, with persevering delicacy, the offer-

UNCLE PETER PUTTING THE CHICKENS IN THE WINDOW.

ing always came at night. Isabel in vain attempted to discover who this unseen friend was. She suspected Doctor Worthington, but did not venture to charge him with it, lest, if she should be mistaken, he would divine the extreme penury to which they had sunk. As for Mrs. Courtenay, she supposed that the table was supplied altogether from Isabel's purse.

Full of this belief, Mrs. Courtenay said, a few days before Christmas,

"We must have a turkey on Christmas, Isabel, and try, for once, to live a little like old times. What gay doings," she added, with a sigh, "your poor, dear father used to have at Christmas!"

"I wonder," thought Isabel to herself, "if my unknown fairy will send us a turkey. If he don't, I must buy one, cost what it may, lest ma should think it queer to get chickens so often, yet have no turkey at Christmas."

But the fairy came to her aid. The morning before Christmas, on going into the out-kitchen, there lay a magnificent turkey-hen, big enough, indeed, to last their little family for half a week, and as tender as a spring chicken.

What a feast Mrs. Courtenay and Alfred had. And how the former enjoyed the glass of wine which had been carefully and secretly saved by Isabel, all the time from Alfred's sickness, solely for the occasion.

But there was no turkey, that Christmas, at Uncle Peter's cabin, much to the surprise and sorrow of his little ones, who had never known such an omission. They were put off with a solitary fowl, of which they ate almost the whole, for it was the first one they had seen for many a long week, and the parents

denied themselves in order that the children might have enough.

Notwithstanding Uncle Peter's secret aid, Isabel's anxieties increased. The winter proved unusually severe, and some of her scholars getting sick, in consequence, as their parents said, of the cold, and often stormy walk to school, and being taken away till spring, her resources were considerably diminished.

Her own health suffered also. She caught a violent cold about New Year's, which no remedies appeared to reach. She began, at last, herself to fear, as her mother daily dolorously declared, that her lungs were affected. The cough racked her weak frame to such a degree that often she expected to break a blood-vessel; and, in such spasms, her head felt frequently as if it was being rent apart.

What wonder that, sometimes, human weakness overcame her heroic spirit; that even the promises and consolations of religion failed her for a moment; and that she almost longed for death. She flew to God for help, and clasping the altar, as it were, found safety in earnest supplication.

One afternoon she had so much to do in setting things to rights that the night began to fall before she had finished. The rapidly increasing darkness, made the denser from the prospect of a storm, alarmed her at her delay. She hastily left her work, and set out to return home.

Some snow was on the ground, the remains of a storm a few days before, and over this there lay a beaten path across the fields, a short-cut to the village. She struck into this immediately, and began to walk very fast, hoping to reach the cottage before it became altogether dark.

But she had not proceeded far when the ominous look of the sky, and the boding, melancholy sound of the wind began to fill her with strange alarm. The heavens had that peculiarly dark-ashen hue, the certain premonition of a snow-storm. The wind moaning through the creaking trees, and sighing over the white, desolate expanse of fields, made her heart beat quick with vague terrors. Every instant the landscape in sight narrowed its circuit, the dark horizon shutting in, closer and closer, on all sides, till the round wall of blackness seemed to her straining eyes actually to be in motion, and advancing upon her. The village, but now in full sight, was no longer visible. Farm-house after farm-house was devoured in succession, by the greedy night. A universal chaos of darkness seemed overtaking the world.

For the first time it now occurred to Isabel that, perhaps, it would have been wiser for her to have taken the public highway. She remembered having read of persons, in similar circumstances, who had lost themselves. She turned, at this reflection, to retrace her steps. But, at that instant, the threatening tempest burst, a wild flurry of snow driving full in her face. She was blinded. The impetuous dash of flakes almost took away her breath. She paused, and stood still, paralyzed, uncertain for a moment what to do; and all the while the landscape in sight narrowed around her, the horizon closed up, and the few familiar houses disappeared. But it was not alone the darkness which now circumscribed the prospect. The fast falling flakes drew a veil around her, which, though it blew occasionally aside, ever fell again, with its white and glancing folds, impenetrable as a dungeon wall.

The suddenness of the storm appalled Isabel. Already the beaten foot-path had disappeared. To advance or retire was equally dangerous, because there was no escape for her in either case. At first a fence had been visible ahead, and beyond and above it, dimly seen, like a ghost through a mist, the wood through which the foot-way ran. But now the fence had totally vanished; so also had the trees. But a spectral shadow was seen occasionally waving in the air for an instant, and then vanishing like the wing of a bird lost in a dark, night-sky; and Isabel thought this might be, perhaps, the distant wood, though it was possible, she knew, to be only a whirling, evanescent cloud. After a moment of doubt, a moment of nerveless terror, she rallied herself, and resolutely set forth in that direction.

Fiercely the wind rushed across the blank landscape, now howling like wolves in pursuit of prey, and now shrieking like the lost souls, who in Dante's awful poem, are driven by tempests of hail and fire alternately. For awhile the gale would seem to have spent itself. The flakes would then fall nearly perpendicularly, millions being in sight at once, blinding the eye by their ceaseless, countless, downward flow. Isabel did not know whether the awful silence of these moments, or the roar of the storm preceding and following them, was the most terrible. Such intervals of quiet never continued long. Soon fresh hurricanes swept the waste. The flakes raced wildly before the wind, or spun around, or shot into the air, or rushed hither and thither, in and out, diagonally, vertically, in every possible contortion; and as this mad play, or torture, whichever it was, went on, the gale groaned, yelled, and screamed, as if all the

agonizing cries, that had ever been wrung from mortal sufferers, had been condensed together and found vent in that wind of woe.

Through all this Isabel struggled, heroically, for awhile, keeping her face in the direction she believed she ought to go. Sometimes the gale almost tore her bonnet away. Sometimes it was with difficulty that she could hold her cloak around her. Now the violence of the gust prevented her from advancing. Now the force of counter blasts, striking her unexpectedly, almost prostrated her. Yet she battled bravely, and for a long time, against the elements. Battled till her knees began to give out from weakness, till the cold benumbed her whole body, till the darkness shut in bodily around her, and she could see nothing but the white flash of the ceaseless, countless, ever-descending flakes immediately before.

Then, at last, her spirits began to sink. Satisfied now that she had lost her way, and fancying she might be walking in a circle all this time, she stood still. But, unwilling yet to give up her exertions, and hoping that she might be within hearing of some one, she began to shout with the utmost strength of her weak voice.

As well might she have whispered amid the roar of the surf, or tried to make herself heard above the thunderbolt. Her feeble cries were flung back upon her by the mocking wind. It seemed as if she could actually reach her hand to the furthest point where her wild words had penetrated into the tempest. Or the cries would appear to be taken up by the scornful gale, to be tossed about in play, to be mimicked, to be hurled high into the black abyss over-head, far from mortal ears, and then quenched forever. At last, hoarse with many vain attempts, Isabel abandoned this hope of succor.

But even yet she did not surrender her struggle for life. She knew that if she remained quiet the numbness of death would soon seize her, and that long before morning could dawn, she would no longer be with the living. Already the deceitful languor was stealing over her, of which she had read as the most fatal of signs. But the recollection of her mother and of Alfred roused her.

"Who will take care of them if I perish?" she cried, and, at the thought she started forward, in a new attempt to find the path.

All, however, was in vain. Blinded by the storm, baffled by the glancing snow-flakes, misled by flitting shadows in the air, she advanced only to retrace her steps again, going round and round, yet never making progress, but becoming fainter and more bewildered continually.

At last she could move forward no longer. The snow had, by this time, fallen so deep that even to step was difficult. Her strength was utterly gone. Her mind sympathizing with her body, hope, courage, and energy fled, and, like a drowning person, exhausted by abortive and protracted struggles, she no longer cared for life. The relief from further effort seemed to her a greater bliss than all things else. Sinking down on the snow, she closed her eyes, faintly thought of home, and with a dreamy sort of prayer, recommending her soul to God, passed into forgetfulness.

"Mother—brother," then after a pause and rally, "Saviour," were the last words that fluttered from her weak lips. They were heard, in awe-struck silence, by the elements around; and, with a howl of despair, as if some demon had been cheated of his prey, the gale began again.

The gale began again. The wind shrieked, the

flakes descended, the night advanced. Gradually a drift heaped itself up on the spot where Isabel had sunk down. It was the snow forming a winding sheet around her.

And while her grave was thus being dug, as it were, already, her mother sat at home, terrified at her absence, yet utterly helpless, not daring to venture out into the storm for aid.

CHAPTER XV.

THE ENGLISHMAN.

A GLOWING fire burned in the brightly polished steel grate of Mr. Sharpe's dining-room. The windows were closed, though it was yet only four o'clock; the gas lighted; the curtains drawn; and every thing made to look cozy and inviting. The table, covered with its spotless white damask cloth, fairly glittered with cut-glass and silver; and around the board was gathered a choice circle of guests.

Mr. Sharpe, presiding at his table, on the occasion of a dinner party, was in his glory. He could there patronize to his heart's content. Contemplating his showy table-service, and observing the relish with which his guests sipped his rare wines, he swelled with secret importance, and for the time was the happiest of men.

Mr. Sharpe was not only a philanthropist, as he loved to call himself, but a lion-hunter; and, perhaps, both characteristics had the same origin, personal vanity. He made it a point to call on all the distinguished

foreigners who visited the country, and to invite them to his table. No stranger of note, whether from home, or abroad, could appear in the city, without Mr. Sharpe managing, in some way, to secure an introduction.

Mr. Sharpe had just succeeded in catching two lions, who had landed from Europe in successive steamers, and whom he thus described to each other, when he separately asked them to the same dinner party.

"Mr. Brawler is an Englishman of fortune, and a member of Parliament, sir," he said to the later arrival of the two. "One of the real old gentry, who think it a condescension, you know, to accept a peerage. You will find him gifted with a large and philanthropic heart, a profound thinker, a statesman of thorough intelligence. I am honored to be able to bring two such gentlemen together."

To Mr. Brawler he said.

"You will meet at my house, among others, a young countryman of mine, the heir of one of the few rich old families we have left in America. He has just returned from a tour in the East, where he penetrated further into the desert than any white man is known to have gone before. He has a brilliant mind, and will make a noise yet. A birth, fortune, and position like his, backed by such abilities, should secure him any prize he chooses to compete for."

When, therefore, the two gentlemen met at Mr. Sharpe's table, they naturally looked at each other with some curiosity. The young American found his brother notability to be a thick-set, red-faced, and loud-voiced Englishman, with an exaggerated air of self-importance, and a style of conversation so dogmatic as often to be insolent. The purpose of his visiting the United States had not yet transpired, but it subsequently appeared

that he came as an itinerant lecturer, to declaim against slavery, in the Northern towns and villages.

Mr. Brawler was as little satisfied with the appearance of the young American, as the latter had been with that of the Englishman. Indeed no two persons could be more dissimilar, not only in appearance, but in views, feeling, soul, in short every thing that makes a man. Walworth was still young in years, not over thirty at the furthest, though he would have looked even younger but for the decision and energy Nature had implanted on his countenance. His face was not handsome, in the ordinary meaning of that term: there was too much character in it for that: but it was a face that, once seen, haunted the memory for ever. The broad, massive brow; the deep-set eye; and the firm mouth were full of majestic power.

Walworth was a philanthropist without pretending to be one. For human suffering, in whatever guise it came, his sympathy was ever ready. If he scorned any thing, it was that merely conventional charity, which never looks beyond a creed, or clique. He had travelled too much to be narrow-minded. Diversity of opinion he knew was inevitable, and never objected to it when honest and sincere. But cant, hypocrisy and Pharisaism, in all its Protean shapes, he abjured and despised.

These were the two men who now met at the table of Mr. Sharpe. For awhile the talk was on indifferent subjects, but finally Mr. Brawler, after whispering with a gentleman at his elbow, and looking meaningly at Walworth, addressed the latter.

"Excuse me, sir," he said, "for the imputation I am going to make, if it should prove incorrect. But I

have been informed you are a slave-holder, which if true, astonishes me beyond conception."

Walworth darted a look at the utterer of this insolent speech, which would have shamed any man of right feeling into an apology. But Mr. Brawler was too obtuse to see it.

"You have been rightly informed, sir," answered Walworth, at last, "I *am* a slave-holder."

"You have been in England," was the unabashed reply, "where I should have thought you would have learned the heinousness of slavery."

"Our young friend," interposed Mr. Sharpe, "did not come prepared, probably, to discuss slavery."

"I never shrink from the discussion," replied Walworth, "where it is desired by others. Pray allow Mr. Brawler to proceed."

"Why I didn't think," said Mr. Brawler, slowly and with a look of wonder, "that any body ever pretended to defend slavery, even in the United States. Pray, Mr. Walworth, where did you buy your slaves?"

"I did not buy them. I inherited them. They, and their ancestors have been in my family, ever since the original stock was imported from Africa, which was done by England, against the wishes of the colonists."

This home-thrust disconcerted even Mr. Brawler for a moment. But he rallied immediately.

"Oh! ay!" he said. "But that is no excuse for you. That was in the old times, before the days of human progress. We, in England, are more enlightened now. We consider all men our brothers. We hold that every man has an equal right, as your Declaration expresses it, 'to life, liberty, and the pur-

suit of happiness.' That's the nineteenth century doctrine."

"I was quite mistaken then, I find," said Walworth, drily, "in the opinion I formed of England. From what I saw there, I concluded, that an equal right to pursuit of happiness was about the last thing your legislators believed in: for while I beheld one man owning a hundred thousand acres, I saw another without a shilling, while one had a superfluity of every thing, the other was literally starving. How men can have equal rights to happiness, under such a state of things, I cannot comprehend."

"All enjoy freedom, nevertheless," said Mr. Brawler.

"A mockery of freedom! An impassable barrier, deep and wide as Death," answered Walworth, indignantly, "rolls between your operative and real freedom. A hind your rural laborer is born, and a hind he has to remain. A net-work of prejudices, now of caste, now of money, now of race, hold him down, so that practically his escape from a servile condition is more impossible than that of an American slave. The latter *can* buy his freedom, whereas your field-laborer is hopelessly the bondman of his employer."

"Oh! no sir, no sir. We have no fugitive slave-law."

"Haven't you? When a rural operative leaves his parish to seek higher wages, don't you send him back as a vagrant, and place him again in the power of his landlord? My dear sir," said Walworth, with a smile of irony, "your fugitive law is the worse of the two. Ours is but a merciful copy of yours."

There was a stir among the company at this. But Mr. Brawler covered his confusion by sipping his wine: and then, returning to the attack, said,

"But the English laborer can spend his wages as he likes."

"Much benefit that is to him. He never receives enough to get even the necessaries of life. Under such circumstances, to talk of a man's having a choice as to the way he shall spend his wages, is hypocrisy. In truth, the condition of such a laborer is worse than that of a slave. The latter has, at the worst, plenty to eat. The former rarely gets more than enough to make him long for a sufficiency, as the highest felicity of life, hence the bestial way in which they indulge themselves when they get an opportunity. Any traveller, who contrasts the haggard faces of the British operative, whether in country or town, with the well-fed ones of the Southern slave, sighs over the lot of the former as physically the worse of the two."

"Ah! that's the point," said Mr. Brawler, eagerly, catching at what he fancied was a slip. "It's the moral and religious condition of the slave that is so awful."

"You mean the moral and intellectual condition of the British laborer. Our Southern slaves almost universally possess religious instruction, have some ones to care for their immortal souls. I speak now of a fact which you, sir, may verify if you will go through the South. But in England, there are millions who are literally like sheep without a shepherd. In the rural districts, the regular church is open to them, indeed, but its sermons are above their comprehension, and so they mostly remain away. Nor does the rector, except in rare instances, ever hunt them up. They live and die, therefore, in virtual Paganism, in heathenish practices of the grossest kind. Those who live in cities are even more neglected. They are born in a cellar,

they famish all their lives in a cellar, and the typhus bred in their cellar carries them off before they are forty. Nothing struck me more, in Glasgow, and in other manufacturing towns, than the prematurely aged aspect of the operative. Now, sir, these things I have seen, and you must have seen them there too."

"But our operatives," answered Mr. Brawler, "do not violate the marriage tie. I am told that the slaves never marry at all."

"Surely, my dear sir," said Walworth, blandly, "somebody has been hoaxing you. But there is one crime entirely unknown in the South, which is of daily occurrence in England: that is infanticide. No slave-mother has ever been known to strangle her babe, out of horror for the condition of life into which it has been born. But to get a little money from a burial club, children, in England, are often put to death. A tree, it is said, may be known by its fruits. What must we think of that system, which so brutalizes its victim, that it destroys the natural instinct of the mother, and makes her think more of a few shillings than of the life of her infant. When slavery reduces the slave-mother to that pass, it will be time for Englishmen to talk, but not before."

Mr. Brawler again shifting his ground, remarked triumphantly,

"Against negro slavery Great Britain has affixed her seal of eternal condemnation. She has emancipated eight hundred thousand slaves, at a cost of twenty millions, and she throws down that fact as a gauntlet in the face of the world."

"It is very easy to pay twenty millions, when those who vote the sum have little, comparatively, to do with paying it. Your aristocracy and gentry, who

compose your parliament, borrowed this boasted twenty millions, leaving it a charge on the state, and therefore a burden on the people's industry forever. They made the load on the shoulders of the operative still heavier, and thus while emancipating the negro slave, thrust the white laborer deeper into the gulf of poverty and degradation. You must permit me to think that there was small philanthropy in this. England has robbed the present and all future generations of her operatives, in order to perform an act of questionable benevolence."

"An act of questionable benevolence?"

"Yes," replied Walworth. "For one thing is certain. By emancipating the West India slaves, England has ruined the white planter. Now I consider that a very questionable act of benevolence, which elevates one class by pulling down another. Nor is this all. England has destroyed the productiveness of her West India islands by the same act, their exports being now very far below what they were in the time of slavery. You Englishmen, being no longer able to deny this fact, meet it by saying that the negro, at any rate, is happier, a result cheaply purchased by the loss of a paltry sugar crop. Happier he may be, in the vagabond sense of that term. Happy, if a man *can* be happy, who violates the great law of God, by living in constant idleness. But for you, the boasted friend of progress and civilization, to take this ground, will not do. The West India negro, according to one of your own statesmen, who was prominent in procuring the act of emancipation, has actually fallen in the scale of humanity. He is, according to Lord Brougham, rapidly declining into barbarism. So that, you see, this much

lauded measure was, even as regards the Jamaica slaves, an act of questionable benevolence."

Walworth paused for a reply. But his adversary could not gainsay these facts; and the young American continued,

"Since we are on this subject," he said, "let us go to the bottom of it. I assert that the act of emancipation has not only ruined the planter, destroyed the commercial value of the British West India islands, and sunk the negro in the scale of civilization, intelligence and progress, but has given an enormous impulse to the slave-trade, and has made slavery, in both Cuba and Brazil, infinitely worse than before."

"You amaze me," said a gentleman, who had listened eagerly to this conversation, but had not before uttered a word.

But Mr. Brawler made no remark. Only he took out his watch uneasily, looked at it, and then assumed an air of unconcern.

"It would consume too much of your time, gentlemen," said Walworth, "to argue this point, at that length, which would be necessary to make it conclusive to all. But no person, I think, can have studied the course of legislation in England, in reference to the sugar-tax, without being forced to acknowledge that the gradual removal of the protective duties on colonial sugar, has been a consequence of the Emancipation Act. To come, therefore, at once to results. Since that act, Cuba and Brazil, instead of Jamaica, have principally supplied Great Britain with sugar. This sugar has been raised at an enormous consumption of negro life. To fill the chasm occasioned by this waste, as well as to find hands for new estates brought under cultivation, Spain and Brazil have winked at immense

annual importations of slaves. I have not the statistics at hand, but such of you as are interested in pursuing this subject, can easily procure them; and they show incontrovertibly that the number of native-born Africans, carried into slavery, through these indirect consequences of Jamaica emancipation, is frightful. In the course of my travels I have been in Cuba. I have there seen slaves, on the sugar-plantations, literally worked to death, a thing never heard of till within the last ten years. Oh! Great Britain has much to answer for, in that ill-judged and hasty act of emancipation. For myself, with every desire to believe otherwise, I am forced to regard it as one of those well-meaning measures, which nations as well as men sometimes are led into by a good impulse; but which, not having been duly considered, in all its remote consequences, has led to evils incalculably greater than those it was intended to remove. I am warranted, therefore, in repeating that your famous Emancipation Act was an act of questionable benevolence."

"I have always thought," said the gentleman, who had before spoken, "that England would not have been so ready to emancipate, if she had not been legislating for a colony. She makes no effort to elevate her tenantry, for instance."

"Very true," was Walworth's reply. "Ireland is a case in point. If England is really philanthropic let her do something for poor old Ireland. The finest country in the world, originally inhabited by one of the best races of peasantry, has been reduced, by centuries of oppression, to a comparative desert."

"Sir," said Mr. Brawler, with evident irritation, "the Irish are a lazy race; nothing can be done for them."

"So, if a people are lazy," quickly retorted Wal-

worth, "that excuses every thing. Why, with that argument, you can defend even Cuban slavery."

A general smile went round the circle at the expense of Mr. Brawler.

"It is your own argument, at any rate," he sulkily replied.

"Not by any means. I consider it the duty of a slave-owner to do all he can to elevate the African, and generally this duty has been fulfilled in the United States."

"Good heavens!" ejaculated Mr. Brawler.

"I don't wonder at your amazement, for really so little is known in England about the actual condition of our slaves, that I found every body there supposing that whips, chains, torture, and even murders were common things. But a single fact will show that I am correct. The American slave is, both intellectually and morally, higher in the scale of humanity than was his African ancestor, or is the native of Africa now. We Southerners are elevating the negro, even with slavery. You, in England, are degrading him, without it. Practically, therefore, we have more reason to boast. But to return to Ireland. You say the Irish are lazy. In this country we do not find them so. On the contrary they are generally industrious and economical. The case then stands thus. England has, by intruding a conquering caste into Ireland, and by robbing the Celtic population of the land, reduced the Irish peasantry to a condition even worse than that of the English operative, of which I spoke awhile ago. Two famines, and an epidemic, the result of those famines, have sprung from these ages of oppression, instead of being, as English writers impiously have it, 'a visitation of God.' Yet to every

appeal for justice a deaf ear has been turned. And why? Because the land-owners, who originally obtained the soil by robbery, refuse to yield even a portion of their ill-gotten gains; and without land to cultivate, or with land only to be had at an enormous rent, the peasant must starve. Sir, the British parliament insults mankind, when it boasts of West Indian emancipation, yet famishes, enslaves, and murders the millions of Ireland. Let England begin at home, let her cleanse her own Augean stable, before she undertakes to preach to other nations."

"Sir, sir," stammered Mr. Brawler, rising, "I did not come here to turn my friend's dinner table into a hustings."

"Excuse me," answered Walworth, appealing by a look to the company, "but it was not I that began the discussion. The gauntlet was hurled in my face, and I could do nothing else than take it up."

Mr. Brawler saw, by the looks of the guests, that he had made a false step.

"Ahem," he said composedly, "I haven't time—at least now—to answer you, my young friend. Unfortunately I have an engagement, about this hour," and again he drew forth his watch. "Mr. Sharpe will excuse me, I trust. Gentlemen, good evening."

And the discomfited Englishman slunk from the room.

CHAPTER XVI.

THE SUPPLIANT.

Mr. Sharpe accompanied his guest to the outer door. He had appeared uneasy during the whole latter part of the discussion, and it was evidently to soothe his brother philanthropist that he paid him now this extraordinary attention.

The mansion was a double one, with a wide hall running through the centre; and the dining-room was on the left hand as you entered. Hence a conversation, going on in the vestibule, could be heard at table, when the dining-room door was left open. This door Mr. Sharpe had forgot to shut. But as he spoke in a low voice, only indistinct murmurs were heard at first. When, however, the outer door had clanged to, after the departing Englishman, a woman's voice addressed their host.

"Plase yer honor," it said. "The lad that boards wid me, Masther Courtenay, is very low the day, and nivir a docthor has he had yet. I've been waithin here, ivir so long, to have spache of yer honor, but they tould me ye were engaged, and wouldn't let me see you."

"What's the woman talking about, James?" said Mr. Sharpe, speaking in a low voice, as if addressing the footman.

"Shure and it's of the lad, him that works for yer honor. The beautiful, brave boy, that has the sick mo-

ther at home, and is working the heart's blood out of him, to send her money. He's the fever, this blessed day. He's out of his head wid it intirely, and no docthor, and I not a penny in the house to pay for one. For the love of God, yer honor, send a docthor to the boy. It's for that I've come."

The eager, trembling tones of the voice could not be mistaken. They were those of one who believed that life and death hung on her words.

The reply of Mr. Sharpe was delivered in so low a tone that it did not reach the ears of his guests. Indeed, Walworth, to relieve themselves from being unwilling listeners, asked his neighbor some indifferent question, which had, as he intended it should, the effect of starting conversation; and in the din of this, the voices outside were lost. Occasionally, however, the Irish woman was heard, as if speaking earnestly, and even indignantly; while a testy reply broke, once or twice, from the lips of Mr. Sharpe.

At last, after an absence of nearly five minutes, the owner of the mansion returned.

"You will excuse me," he said, "for this protracted absence, when I tell you that I was beset by an Irish creature, who had designs on my purse. I don't envy a man who has the reputation of being rich," he added complacently, "in a great city like this; for the claims on him are innumerable."

"And the poor seem to think they have a right to assistance," replied one of his friends, "instead of taking an alms as a favor. For my part, I believe that half the money one gives only acts as a bounty on idleness."

"Regular mendicity is one thing you are free from

at the South," said the gentleman, who had before spoken, addressing Walworth. "Is it not?"

"Yes. The master there is responsible for the maintenance of the slave. He has to support all the young, all those too aged to work, all the infirm, in short every description of those, who, in the North, go to make up real mendicity."

"That makes the relation between master and slave fairer than I had been led to consider it," was the reply. "I had only thought of the inadequate food and clothing given, instead of wages, to the slave."

"A very great mistake exists at the North," said Walworth, "in regard to this matter. In fact here you look only at one side of the picture. As a question of dollars and cents, I do not think the Southern master is on even an equality with the Northern employer; in other words, it can be shown that the latter gets more out of his operative, for the same money, than the former. One fact alone shows this: our worn-out lands don't pay for working by slave-labor, yet Yankees have made money by farming them with hired white men."

"But, at any rate, you nearly starve your niggers," interposed Mr. Sharpe.

"Come South and examine for yourselves. Slaves are as well fed as your day-laborers, and a good deal happier. The difficulty is, that abolitionists don't come South, but manufacture their facts here at the North, to suit their own purposes."

"Why, you don't mean to say," retorted Mr. Sharpe, "that they don't sell negroes in Virginia to places further South, and that consequently families are not frequently separated thus?"

"Yes, that's the point," said another. "It's that

disturbance of the family relation which makes me a free-soiler, and has made thousands of others."

"No, I don't say that such things never happen. But they are very rare. They form the exception, not the rule. Every condition of life has its hardships. You mustn't blame slavery for what is no more an incident of it than of all other states of poverty. You have things as bad here at the North, yet nobody hears a word about them."

"Oh! no, you mistake, you can name nothing half so bad!"

"Don't you have such things as bound girls? I think I have seen poor, neglected creatures of that description, who have been torn from their parents, for no crime, but that they were poor, and consigned to a legal slavery for a term of years, that is till they were of age."

"But that isn't for life."

"One thing at a time, if you please," said Walworth blandly. "Let us first settle this question of tearing parents and children asunder, or husband and wife. You accuse slavery of it exclusively. I retort by saying that you do it, in every poor-house, as between man and wife; that your guardians of the poor do it as between parent and child; and that the operation of your social system does it continually, by compelling families to separate in order that they may live, sending a son to California or to the Guinea coast, a daughter to the West to teach school, or a father to India to die of cholera."

"But they do this of their own free choice. No heartless master drives them to it."

"Yes, there is a master, and one as inexorable as the cruellest slave-holder; it is poverty. Do it

by free choice! Let their tears and breaking hearts answer."

"But the instances are rare."

"Less rare than similar separations at the South. Look around you, among even those you know yourself, and you will shudder to think how many northern families are thus torn asunder. The thing is so common, in truth, you have become used to it."

"At least it is not for life."

"How many are re-united? Recall the thousands who die annually, away from home, and among heartless strangers, and you will scarcely say that their separations are not for life. Theoretically they are not so, I grant; but practically, alas! they are."

"I see that I have never really examined the subject," said the gentleman, who had so often spoken. "Why, in many respects, the condition of the slave is better than that of the free laborer. He is entirely exempt, for example, from the corroding cares of the poor man, of whom we have so many at the North, and who, struggle as they may, never are free from anxiety."

"But is not slavery a sin?" sneered Mr. Sharpe.

"To reply in the affirmative would be to condemn some of the best men who ever lived," answered Walworth, "for they have been slave-holders. Slavery has been known among all nations and in every age of the world. The patriarchs held slaves. Hagar was a bond-woman. There were slaves among the Jews. Nor did the laws of Moses repudiate such property *per se*. Slaves were common in the days of the Apostles. Yet we find them nowhere assailing slavery as wrong in itself. Cruelty, covetousness, brutality, want of human feeling, extortion, and all the catalogue of

vices that, exercised by the rich, oppress the poor, by the master, tyrannize over the slave, are denounced again and again, and in terms terrific in their severity, by Christ and his Apostles."

"What is your conclusion then?"

"That slavery is but one of the modifications which capital and labor assume. In that light it is the abuse of the master's power that is sinful, just as the abuse of the power of capital is a sin. I can conceive of cases where it would be a sin to emancipate—"

"My dear sir, you shock me." Mr. Sharpe was the speaker.

"It would, at least in my opinion," said Walworth, "be a sin to free a slave, if he was incapable, afterwards, of earning a living, and would therefore starve. Many have done so, you know. I saw the notice of such a fact in the paper only last week. Where one of your colored population at the North, dies outright of starvation, however, ten perish through fevers, the result of bad food and unhealthy lodgings. For all these cases you Northerners before God are responsible. I say it solemnly. Just as responsible as the English nation was for the late famine and pestilence in Ireland; and those two terrible visitations were as clearly the result of ages of oppression as lightning is of electricity."

No one could reply to this. Mr. Sharpe shifted uneasily in his seat. Finally Walworth went on.

"All the fanaticism, injustice, abuse, and immature action, which has exhibited itself in reference to this subject, is to be traced to the false assumption that to own a slave is, *per se*, to commit a deadly sin. Paul would never have sent Onesimus back to his master if that had been the case. As for the *ad cap-*

tandum argument, so generally employed to prove slavery, *per se*, sinful, it may be brought forward, with equal force, against the right to hold property of any kind. Prudhon, the French Agrarian, has done so, in fact. The very syllogism, Mr. Sharpe, which you employ to establish that I can have no rightful property in my slaves, will prove as logically that you have no right to be a millionaire."

"Oh! but—oh! but," stammered Mr. Sharpe, "this is ridiculous. Every law recognizes the right of property."

"So the law recognizes my property in slaves."

"But precedent, the long course of ages, all history sustains me."

"We have all on our side."

"But you rob a human being of his liberty. You appropriate his time. That you've no right to do."

"You do it at the North. I have mentioned one case already, that where orphans are bound out, for no crime but poverty, by the overseers of the poor. Your apprenticeship law also recognizes the principle."

"Oh! no," eagerly said Mr. Sharpe, "for the apprentice has to sign the agreement himself."

"Which is a mere trick of your law, and, allow me to say, a most disingenuous one. You won't recognize the right of a minor to make a valid contract for the value of a dime, yet you permit him to bind himself to slavery for a term of years. Logically, therefore, your laws consider ten cents of more value than the liberty of a lad for seven years."

"But," said Mr. Sharpe, "our apprentices are different from your slaves."

"Don't misapprehend me," replied Walworth. "I

only say that, in your apprenticeship system, you recognize the right of one man to hold an exclusive property in the service of another; and that, by recognizing this, you admit the rightfulness of slavery: for as between an apprenticeship for a term of years and slavery for life, the difference is one of degree only, the principle being the same in both cases."

"Pshaw," half angrily retorted Mr. Sharpe, finding himself cornered, "I don't believe in your metaphysics. I'm a practical man."

"But it is by a purely abstract view of the case, by metaphysics as you call it, that the sin of slavery, *per se*, is sought to be proved. Now, frankly, I believe in no such nonsense. The right and wrong of every thing in this world is so mixed up with the circumstances of the particular case, that no man but a closet-visionary, or a lunatic will venture to pronounce abstractly on any social or political question. No man can step either to the right or the left without influencing others, and it behoves him, therefore, to decide every case on its own merits, and not have one Procrustean bed for all."

'But even on the merits of the particular case, American slavery cannot be defended," said Mr. Sharpe, as if sure of victory here.

"I cannot answer for slavery every where in America, but so far as I know it, it is not the thing at all which it is represented to be, here in the North. You have writers and orators on slavery, who pretend to know more of the real condition of the slave than we do, making assertions which are utterly untrue, and which, in the nature of things, cannot be true. For instance, we slave owners are painted, almost universally, as cruel and brutal taskmasters.

Yet interest alone would prevent us from being this. A slave, who is worth a thousand dollars, is too valuable to be whipped to death. If occasionally it happens, so have children, at the North, been whipped to death, by brutal parents. What public sentiment, at the South is, you may know from a fact I read but yesterday; that a ruffian, who mutilated a slave lately, was mobbed, and had to fly for his life. Again, we are regarded, by the abolitionists at least, and described in publications, that circulate all over the world, as men not only without Christian hearts, but without even the common virtues of humanity. This, too, by persons who have never been across Mason and Dixon's line. Now, we planters maintain more intimate and kindly relations with our laborers than the Northern manufacturer with his. You pay him his wages, and there is the end of it. Whether he gets drunk, beats his wife, abuses his children, or neglects the moral culture of his family: whether he has at home a household well or sick:—these things do not concern you. It is not, you say, in the line of your duty. But with us the slave is bound to his master from the cradle to the grave by a thousand ties."

"Still you can't deny," said Mr. Sharpe, "that you whip your slaves. That's a fact it's impossible to get over."

"We do whip, but generally it is only in cases, where, at the North, the offender would be imprisoned. You find people fighting, and you send them to the county jail; you catch them at stealing, and sentence them to the penitentiary: but for similar offences we whip, as you all did a century ago, and as you may do again, a century hence, if your silent system fails."

"You make out the slave," said Mr. Sharpe, surlily, "to be no worse off than the white man."

"Comparisons of that sort are not the true way of putting it. All general, arbitrary assertions are apt to mislead. The slave, be his condition as it may, *is* worse off than you, or me, Mr. Sharpe, or than any free white man, who has either a business, or a fortune, to place him above reasonable fear or want, and save him, therefore, from the anxieties of poverty. But I fear that the average condition of the mere operative, who lives on his daily wages, is not a bit better relatively than that of the slave. The worst huts I ever saw human beings inhabiting, in this country, I saw, some years ago, at the Summit Hill coal-mines. We have nothing so bad at the South."

"Oh! I have never been there. But the workmen are low Irish, I am told."

"They are men and brothers though, to use your own phrase: and certainly a more intellectual race than the African; as good as we are indeed. Yet a net-work of circumstances, which begins weaving at their birth, and goes on till their death, makes them, and every other penniless operative, virtually, though not in name, the slave of the capitalist. What, did a Northern manufacturer tell me, just before I sailed for Europe? I was asking him how the new revenue law, then just passed, would affect him: and his answer was, that the reduction of duty would drive his goods out of the market, unless he could manufacture them cheaper: but this, he continued, he should do. And how? we asked. By cutting down wages, was his reply. And he did cut them down."

"Perfectly right," growled Mr. Sharpe. "The law of supply and demand. Nothing wrong about that."

"Except that it reduces the mere operative to be virtually the slave of the capitalist," said Walworth, scornfully. "And there is no concealing, gentlemen, that this is his real condition, the world over, call him by what name you will. The whole question resolves itself, in fact, into that of the relations between capital and labor. We, at the South, buy our operative outright, giving him food and clothing, and providing for him in youth, sickness, and old age. In return, we appropriate his labor, during the years of his maturity. This is, I don't deny, the rudest shape which these relations assume; but then our operative is the rudest of all, and fit, as a general thing, for no higher relation; for, when he gets free, and comes to the North here, generally, he remains at the bottom of the social ladder, worse off than he was at home, because of his improvidence and want of brain; in other words, he's no match for you Yankees. In Russia capital and labor hold a relation substantially the same, though differing in various details; the operative there is called a serf, instead of a slave. In England, and in our own Northern States, a money wage is paid to the workmen, and all other obligations on the part of the capitalist are considered cancelled. Now you must see that this is a relation which can only succeed where the operative is prudent, laborious and economical; has, in fact, made some considerable advances in civilization. Yankees, however poor at first, can generally get ahead in the world. Not one free negro in a thousand rises from his first condition of 'a hewer of wood and drawer of water.' That hasty observers," resumed Walworth,

"should think slavery so much worse than any other modification of the laborer's lot is not strange, for its evils lie on the surface. The occasional cruelty of masters, the hereditary taint of blood, and the separation of families thrust themselves forward to challenge sympathy. But the kind care of the master, the sacrifices made to keep mother and children together, and all that is really ameliorating and lovely in the institution lies deep in its heart, and shuns ostentatious display. But with you, and much the more with England, it is the apparent good that is most obvious, the secret cancer that is concealed. Your splendid manufactories, dashing equipages, immense warehouses, and all that is dazzling and seductive in your social system meets the traveller at every turn; but they cannot hide from the man, who is earnest to arrive at truth, the destitution, profligacy and crime in your great cities, that surges, like a sea, under all."

"Then you would keep the slaves in bondage. You are opposed entirely to emancipation."

"I would fit the slaves to be free first. At present they would, as a mass, be worse off, if free, than as slaves: and to this conclusion every liberal-minded man comes who travels at the South. That the race can be developed, and is being developed, I have no doubt. Indeed I believe that this was the purpose of the Almighty, in allowing them to be brought hither; for, in the same way, by permitting the Israelites to fall into slavery in Egypt, he disciplined them for the great work before them, and made them familiar with all the arts of the then most civilized nation in the world."

"The time then, you think, has not come for negro emancipation."

"When the time really comes," said Walworth, sol-

emnly, "there will be no uncertainty as to what is to follow. What is to be done with the negro, after being freed, will not then have to be asked, as it is now, without hope of an answer. That abolitionism cannot solve that question is to me conclusive proof that it is not of God. He never cuts loose the anchor and sends us adrift, till the port is in sight."

"But meantime," said the gentleman that had spoken so frequently, "is nothing to be done?"

"Yes, meantime," sneered Mr. Sharpe again.

"Meantime," stoutly replied Walworth, "we must do our duty. God will provide the rest. Sometimes I think glimpses of light may be discerned pointing out the final way to be taken. Sometimes it seems as if events were visibly tending, under the finger of Providence, to the regeneration and deliverance of Africa's sons, for the deliverance cannot come, remember, with the Almighty's sanction, unless the regeneration precedes it. But it grows late, gentlemen." "And," he continued, addressing Mr. Sharpe, "I have more faith in one sincere Methodist preacher, to do good to both slave and master, by converting each, than in all the abolition societies ever instituted. And if there was more true religion at the North, there would be fewer social evils and less misguided interference with the South."

"I say amen to that with all my heart," remarked the gentleman who had spoken so often.

Soon after the party broke up.

CHAPTER XVII.

HORACE AGAIN.

WALWORTH was the first to leave. As he closed the hall-door behind him he was confronted by a poor Irish woman, who had been sitting on the steps, but who rose and curtesied at his appearance.

There was a look of anxiety in her countenance too earnest to be that of a professional beggar, and Walworth, pausing, said,

"What can I do for you, my good woman?"

"Can yer honor get me spache of Mr. Sharpe again? If it's only for a moment, for the love of the blessed saints."

A sudden thought struck Walworth. He recolleeted the conversation in the hall, fragments of which he had overheard.

"Are you the woman," he said, "that was to see him an hour or two ago?"

She answered in the affirmative.

"Have you come on the same errand?"

She said she had.

"Then I fear it will be useless to see him. But I'll ring if you wish."

"And he'll not see me, yer honor thinks," cried the woman, wringing her hands. "And the lad dying the day. Oh! what shall I do?"

"Dying! Who is dying? Maybe I can help you."

"It's the poor dear child that's been lodging with

me, iver since he went into the gentleman's store. He's down with the fever, and it's dying he is, I fear. They won't pay him any wages, for they say he ain't airning nothing, and there he is, without a bit of a docthor, and the fever eatin' out his heart. Shure, to call this a Christian counthry, where a friendless orphan has to die, because he's no one but a poor washerwoman to help him, and she scarcely able to live herself, while the rich ride in their carriages, and the beggar's turned from their doors—it's my curse will rest on it forever."

"My good creature," said Walworth, "if you'll lead me to this lad, I'll see what can be done. He shall have a doctor."

"The Holy Virgin reward ye, for ye're a rael gentleman, and the heart in yer body isn't a stone, as it is with them in there."

"How do you know the lad is an orphan?" said Walworth, as he followed her.

"Shure, he told me that same. He's from forrin parts, a place they call Virginey. Where the naygars come from, yer honor," she added by way of explanation.

"Ah!"

"Yes, and the lad's seen better days, for though he niver, when well, tould me much, I've heard him, since he was taken down, raving about grand houses, and his beautiful sister, and his mother. And he talks how he is to make his fortune, and buy back the ould place. And this," she added bitterly, "when he's getting a miserable dollar a week only, and has caught the fever by working like a naygar at that. It's a haythan, that Mr. Sharpe is, a bloody, murthering haythan."

"Can such heartless conduct be possible?" said Walworth to himself, and he resolved to satisfy himself, on this point, in the morning.

"A dacenter lad niver was, yer honor," continued the washerwoman. "He had none of the bad thricks of other boys of his age in the store. He niver went, on Sunday, a pleashuring with them, because he said he'd promised not to, and thought it wrong any how to go. But instead he went to church. He'd no place but the Methydist meeting, for at the big churches, as yer honor knows, the seats ain't free. Sometimes he went to chapel with me, and I wish he'd went ofthener, though shure they won't be hard on such a one, in Purgatory, Protestyant that he is. Begging yer honor's pardon, if yer honor's a Protestyant. But this is the place, up stairs, the fourth story."

Walworth drew back, for an instant, from the repulsive entrance, as Horace had done before. But his hesitation was for a moment only. The washerwoman shot past, and began to mount the staircase, and he followed.

"He was asleep," she said, "when I left him. Afther I was at Mr. Sharpe's, this afternoon, he grew worse, and though they'd turned me out of doors, I went back again, when he fell into the doze, praying all the way that the saints would soften their hearts. God bless yer honor for coming. This is the door."

The little chamber was lighted by a single dim tallow candle. It was almost bare of furniture; a cot bed, a trunk, two chairs, and a small pine table being all it contained. The apartment, however, was studiously clean.

"Hush," said the washerwoman, approaching the bed, and lifting up her finger, "he's sleeping yet."

Walworth, gazing down on the invalid, saw, by the dim light, a pale, patient, wasted countenance, apparently that of a delicate lad, about fourteen years old. The face had a look of premature age, which told a tale of early privation, that made his heart bleed.

Suddenly the little sufferer stirred.

"Sister," he murmured, lifting his little hand to his brow, "can't you take this red-hot iron away? It burns, it burns—"

"He's always calling to his sister, when he's out of his head, this way, like," said the washerwoman. "Puir child."

Her voice seemed to recall the invalid to himself. He gazed a moment wildly at the speaker, but gradually his look became more collected, and at last he smiled faintly.

"You're watching me yet," he said, "and leaving your work for it. Don't do it any more. I can get along well enough."

"I've brought a gentleman to see you," replied the Irishwoman, directing his attention to where Walworth stood in the shadow.

Walworth came forward.

"I'm much obliged, sir," said the little fellow, making an effort to rise.

But Walworth gently pushed him back. "No, my brave boy, lie still," he said. "I am going for a doctor, and you must'nt rise, or speak, till I return, for you're quite sick, and he might'nt approve of it."

"You don't think I'm much sick, do you?" said Horace, eagerly, his eyes blazing with fever as he spoke. "I shall soon be well, shan't I?"

"I hope so," answered Walworth, affected profoundly. The boy smiled thankfully, and gave a sigh of relief;

then sank quietly back again on the pillow in a sort of lethargy.

The washerwoman followed Walworth out.

"What does yer honor think?"

"He's very ill. Dying, I fear."

"It's murthered he is thin. But the Lord will avenge him yet!"

In less than half an hour Walworth returned with an eminent physician. The lad roused again from his state of stupor, talked wildly for a moment, then, recovering consciousness, smiled gratefully on Walworth, and at the encouraging remarks of the medical man brightened up considerably. Walworth, who had become deeply interested in his protegee, partly from the Irishwoman's story, but more from the boy's winning countenance and manner, began to hope that the disease had not yet assumed a fatal shape. He followed the physician out of the room to have his hopes confirmed.

"He's better than I thought, doctor, isn't he?" he said, as the physician paused on the landing, to feel for the banisters before he began his dark descent.

The medical man shook his head.

"He's as bad as he can be to be alive. The worst of it is that the stamina of the constitution is gone. The child has evidently had his physical strength overtasked, besides being worn down at the same time with some secret mental care. It's an ugly case of nervous fever. Yet if the medicines are given regularly, they may work wonders. It's a pity the case has been neglected so long. If taken in time, I could have cured it in a week."

Walworth returned to the room with a heavy heart. He found Horace, to his surprise, half sitting up.

"The doctor says I'm better, I'm sure he does," he said, looking interrogatively at Walworth. "I feel ever so much better."

"You'll be well, I hope, in a few days. Only cheer up, like a brave lad. We'll have some medicine for you in a little while, and that will be sure to bring you around." Walworth spoke encouragingly, for he knew that cheerfulness was the best remedy, after all, in a sick chamber.

"I told you so," said Horace, turning triumphantly to the Irishwoman. "I'm going to get well, you see, and then I'll repay you for all you've done. Only," he touchingly added, "I can never repay you for your kindness to a poor, strange lad that every body else deserted. But when I grow up, and am a rich man, you shall ride in your carriage, that you shall."

To see this buoyant spirit, these bright hopes in one like this friendless orphan, affected Walworth indescribably.

"So you wish to live," he said, "my lad, to make your fortune—that's a noble little fellow!"

The eye of Horace kindled with that enthusiasm of the soul, which not even the glaze of death can always overcome. The boy had felt, from the first, at home with Walworth, and it did not appear to him, therefore, that he was speaking to a stranger.

"Oh! yes," he said, "for then Isabel shan't teach school any longer, and I'll buy back Uncle Peter and the rest, and won't we be happy?" He clapped his thin, wasted hands in delight, as the picture rose before him.

"You shall tell me all about Isabel and Uncle Peter," said Walworth, sitting down beside him, "while this

good woman goes for the medicine. Only you mustn't get so excited, for that will make you worse, you know."

It was better, Walworth knew, that the lad should be gently talking to him, than fall back into his stupor, or wander again in delirium. During the absence of the Irishwoman, therefore, he drew from Horace, by allowing the lad to tell his own story, all that the reader knows already of the death of Mr. Courtenay, the beggary of the family, and Horace's life at the North. At times, in listening to the artless tale, Walworth could scarcely refrain from tears. The heroic perseverance of the child especially affected him.

When the washerwoman returned, Walworth rose to go.

"I will be here, to-morrow, Horace," he said. "This good woman has promised to sit up with you to-night, and administer your medicine, and, in the morning, I will send a nurse to relieve her. I hope to find you almost well by that time."

"Oh! I know I shall be," cheerfully said the lad.

"And when you get well, we'll go together, some day, and see Isabel," said Walworth, aware that any allusion to that dear sister would be pleasing to the invalid.

"Oh! won't we?"

And the lad's eyes danced with delight as he spoke.

CHAPTER XVIII.

THE RIOT.

"AND this is Mr. Sharpe's philanthropy," said Walworth to himself, as he wended his way to his hotel. And involuntarily he repeated, "Woe unto ye, Scribes and Pharisees, for all your works ye do to be seen of men. Ye devour widows' houses, and for a pretence make long prayers. Ye make clean the outside of the cup and the platter, but within are full of extortion and excess."

Suddenly the loud, sharp ringing of the great town-hall bell startled him from this bitter reverie. The sound was not like the ordinary one, when an alarm of fire is intended, but seemed rather the tocsin of an insurrection, or a summons to arm against invasion.

Simultaneously Walworth saw, on looking down the street, that the whole vast thoroughfare appeared to be alive. Boys were running at the top of their speed, men were hastening their pace, and all were converging towards a cross-street, a few squares ahead. Yet there were no engines out. It was evidently not a fire. In an instant, as if a hive of bees had broken loose, the wide avenue had been filled with people, who now went streaming along towards what was plainly the point of interest, accelerating their pace at every fresh stroke of the alarm-bell. Had Walworth not seen it, he would never have believed, that

a great city could empty its population so quickly. He now understood, for the first time in his life, some of the scenes in Paris, during the Reign of Terror, of which he had read, when a single boom of the tocsin was represented as hurrying the whole vast metropolis out of doors.

Carried along by the crowd, and almost unable to resist being forced into a run, Walworth soon found himself at the mouth of the cross street in question. Though a comparatively large-sized thoroughfare, it was packed with a vast, agitated mass of people, almost as far as the eye could reach. Surging and heaving, the huge crowd undulated to and fro, like a living ocean. Continually a low murmur, as of the undertone of the sea, rose from the heart of that mighty concourse; and occasionally a stifled growl, deepening sometimes into a roar, went up to the quiet sky.

Borne onward by the crowd, which once that it had enveloped him, whirled him resistlessly along, he found himself at length nearly opposite a large, dark edifice, apparently a church, though without a steeple, and plainly built in other respects also. This structure, whatever it was, seemed to be the object which had attracted the crowd together.

"What is the matter?" said Walworth, addressing a surly fellow at his side, who was in his shirt-sleeves, early as the season was. "Is that a church?"

The man measured him, for a moment, from head to foot, as if surprised at such ignorance, and then answered brusquely, "It's the nigger meeting-house."

The truth flashed upon Walworth immediately. He was a witness to one of those frightful riots, which so frequently disgrace the cities of the North, and

which appal the patriot, because they reveal a lawlessness and ferocity of caste-feeling, fatal, unless checked, to the permanency of the republic.

"What are they going to do?" said Walworth. "Not to burn the church?"

The man stared at Walworth, and replied, with an oath, "To be sure they are."

"What for? What have the blacks done?"

"Oh! they're getting too d—d saucy," answered the man. "They want taking down a little."

Another spectator, somewhat better dressed than the red-shirted speaker, and who had been listening to the colloquy, now interposed.

"They've had the impudence to have a procession, a temperance, or a masonic affair, or some other cursed humbug," he said, "and one of the butchers, downtown, threw a sheep's pluck at a big buck nigger strutting in front. The black rascal had the insolence to throw it back, for he knew he and his bloody procession had just then the best of it. There was a fight, and the butchers were beaten off. But they swore revenge, and are now going to burn the church, for it was here the procession was organized."

"Yes," growled the ruffian in his shirt-sleeves, "and one of the black rascals made an oration, they say. It's high time the nigger devils were burned in their nests, when they get to be as impudent as that."

Walworth turned to the more gentlemanly of the two, and said,

"Surely the police won't suffer such an outrage. The poor creatures have a right to enjoy themselves in their own way. They were certainly the aggrieved, not the aggressors, in the first instance—"

But, as he spoke, some one pulled his coat. He

turned, and recognized the gentleman who had dined with him, and who had seemed particularly struck with his arguments.

"Pardon me, Mr. Walworth," he whispered, "but I know the public feeling here better than you, who are a stranger, can be supposed to: and if you talk so freely, you'll get yourself into trouble. The mob is in its most ferocious mood to-night."

As he spoke, he adroitly drew Walworth away, the two rioters following him threateningly, with their eyes, and the red-shirted ruffian muttering something about "the white nigger, who ought to be thrown alive into the burning meeting-house."

With considerable difficulty they edged their way close up against a house, where, under the protection of a stoop, which acted as a sort of breast-work, they were enabled to withstand the occasional rushes of the crowd. Walworth now spoke again.

"Are they really going to burn the church?" For he was still incredulous.

"As really and truly as that we stand here. You heard the origin of the riot. It was exactly as the fellow said."

"But I thought your colored population was free," cried the astonished Walworth. "Yet not to let them have a harmless procession!"

"We can't control the prejudices of the masses, for I won't say the lower orders," replied his companion. "We educated whites would not take exception to such processions. But the great bulk of the working classes, in our cities, hate the blacks with an intensity that combines the prejudices of race and caste into one. To call a man a nigger is the vilest epithet an angry carter can bestow on his antagonist.

Nor is this feeling confined merely to the ignorant and more brutal of our white population. It is shared, more or less, by all classes, up to the most enlightened, though in a less degree. You will see, to-night, that while the active work will be done by the coarsest ruffians, there will be looking on, and passively, at least, engaged in the riot, thousands of comparatively well-dressed men."

"That reminds me," said Walworth, "that I ought not to be here. My presence in part, countenances the outrage."

"You cannot extricate yourself, if you would," retorted his companion. "I suppose you are here in the same way that I am. I became involved in the crowd, was borne along, and must wait quietly till I see a chance to get away. But I would advise you to remain, even if an opportunity of escape offers, for you'll see, with your own eyes, one of the ways in which our social system here works. You'll find the blacks ain't really free, or the law always paramount."

"Surely," said Walworth, "you must be mistaken. Hark! The alarm-bell clangs louder and louder. The police will certainly be here in time."

"Yes, to make a slight demonstration, and then go away, the rioters knowing, all the time, that the officers are with them. Ah! there they come, I've no doubt. That huzza proclaims their approach."

A shout, half merry, half derisive, was heard as he spoke, and immediately the crowd began to sway to and fro, as if some sudden pressure was taking place on its outer circle. The aggressive movement did not seem to be angrily received. There was considerable laughing among the mob, and frequent jests were bandied at the expense of the police. The uni-

versal feeling appeared to be that the intervention was a mere formality.

Meanwhile the crowding, jostling and pushing in the mob immediately around Walworth, became greater, showing that the impinging force was approaching the spot where he stood. He had just mounted on the stoop, in order to have a better view, when he beheld a body of men, about forty or fifty strong, and who marched two abreast, advancing through the crowd, which opened good-humoredly to let them pass. The officer at their head seemed to be quite a favorite with the mob, for his name was often mentioned with that sort of praise which one would give a pet bull-dog, and once a cheer was proposed for him, and actually took place. The police, keeping compactly together, and acting like a wedge, had no difficulty, especially in the present temper of the crowd, to make their way up to the very door of the church, where their leader, mounting the steps, while his followers gathered compactly around him, proceeded to harangue the vast concourse. When he asked for silence, in order to be heard, a general laugh went around, followed by another huzza. The whole demeanor of the rioters proved how well they knew their strength, and showed that they were willing, in consequence of this feeling of assurance, to indulge in a little preliminary sport. So closely are the deepest tragedies and the most hideous excesses allied to savage mirth.

We will not repeat the speech of the functionary. He urged the crowd to depart quietly to their homes, told them he had forbidden the congregation to assemble that night, and added that he had locked up the church to prevent ingress on their part or that of others. This was the substance of the address. The

crowd listened to it with patience, though, towards the close, there were a few hisses, to signify that the hearers began to think it rather prolix. At its close there was a derisive cheer, mingled with groans, hisses and cat-calls. The mob was evidently losing temper, and began to be eager to get at work.

For a few minutes the rioters and police stood watching each other in silence. At last the former began to grow impatient.

"Come down from there, old mutton-fat," shouted a voice out of the heart of the crowd. "You've done your duty. Now let us do our's."

'Fellow-citizens," began the officer, thinking it incumbent on him to make another effort to persuade the mob, and perfectly assured that force was out of the question, "gentlemen—"

"Oh! git out," said a second voice from the crowd. Shouts of laughter followed this application of a cant phrase, current in the streets at that time: and directly after, a cabbage went skimming through the air and fell among the police. This was the signal for a general attack on the authorities. No missiles of a serious character, as yet, were used. Potatoes, eggs, cabbage, and similar articles poured down on the devoted constabulary force. At first the assault was borne in silence. But, finally, one of the policemen, stung by a missile that had struck him in the face, attempted to arrest a rioter. Instantaneously the crowd rushed to the rescue, with a howl that showed how easy it would be to rouse its latent ferocity: the prisoner was torn from the grasp of the officer, who was knocked down, and would have been beaten to death, if his companions had not fortunately succeeded in dragging him within their circle. And now bricks and stones began

to fly, accompanied by wild yells, which reminded Walworth of savages, rather than of civilized men. For the police to have remained and faced the mob, in its present mood, would have been madness. So the word was given to retreat, and the posse accordingly slunk away, followed by the scornful laughter of the crowd.

For a moment after the exit of the police there was a lull. But it was soon broken by a brick-bat, which, flung by a rioter, crashed through one of the windows of the church, and was heard smashing the Venetian blinds within. It was followed by a volley of similar missiles, and, for a few minutes the rattling glass, as the windows went in, accompanied by a huzza! whenever a blow, more destructive than others, was delivered, filled the silence. Then, all at once, came the dull, heavy sound of an axe, as if dealt vigorously on some hollow, yet strong and resisting object.

"My God," said Walworth, "they are breaking in the door. Oh! for a troop of cavalry." For his whole being was a-blaze with indignation at the causeless and atrocious outrage.

"Hush, hush," said his companion, recalling him to himself. "There, the door has given way—they rush in—the authorities, even if they return, will be too late."

While he spoke, the strokes of the axe had redoubled, still dull and heavy, then more rapid than ever. But, all at once, a crash was heard, followed by a piercing yell, and simultaneously the whole crowd rushed in the direction of the entrance.

"This is terrible," said Walworth.

But his companion answered only by pressing his

arm, and Walworth, recalled to himself, watched the progress of events in silence.

The sound of hewing, splitting, and demolishing now followed, as if the rioters were tearing the edifice bodily to pieces. But this did not continue long. Suddenly the interior of the church, which had hitherto remained in total darkness, began to show a dim light within, which brightened and brightened, till every window was in a glow. All this was watched in breathless silence, but when the yellow light danced and flickered thus, over the whole structure, a shout of exultation pealed upwards stunningly from the crowd.

"They have built a fire, by tearing up some pews, I suppose," said Walworth's companion. "A whole army could not save the building now."

No, twenty armies would have been ineffectual, after the start the flames had gained. The fire having now conquered the whole interior, began to stream from the casements, darting and licking forth, then subsiding, again shooting its thin tongues that disappeared immediately, and finally pouring in a solid body outwards and upwards, accompanied by dense puffs of thick, pitchy smoke. As the heat and flames advanced on them, the crowd fell back, leaving an open space, half way across the street, in front of the church. The great town-bell, which had long ceased its alarm, now began to ring for a fire. Some engines were heard hurrying towards the scene of action. But the firemen either cared little to interfere with the crowd, or were forcibly prevented from doing so; for Walworth noticed that none of them came even as close to the burning church as he was, but contented themselves with playing on the contiguous houses only. The alarm bell, all this time, kept up its ominous clamor,

its quick, sharp, angry tones forming a sort of wild music to the orgies of the mob.

And now heavy volumes of sooty, bituminous-looking smoke began to ooze from under the eaves of the house. Up to this point the huge, dark roof had remained safe from the fire. But soon a forky tongue of flame appeared on its surface, and though it vanished immediately, a dozen similar signs of the coming burst were visible at as many different points. The crowd now gazed in profound silence. Suddenly the whole line of the eaves shot into vivid flame. A simultaneous cheer followed from the rioters, whose interest had become excited to the highest point, and who watched the scene as they would the fluctuations of a powerfully played tragedy on the stage. In a few minutes the roof was a solid mass of fire. The lurid conflagration shone reflected from the sky, danced on the houses around covered with human beings, and threw a wild, ghastly radiance on the faces of the upturned crowd. Now the smoke rolled to the heavens, as if ascending from the pit of hell. Now, breaking away before the wind, it revealed millions of sparks streaming down the still half obscured firmament, like stars cut loose from their orbits, and drifting into chaos. No sound from the breathless mob broke the silence, which was disturbed only by the crackling of the flames, the roar of the draught, and the noise of falling timbers. The placid moon, dimly seen through the haze of smoke to windward, shone sorrowfully down on the tragic spectacle, as if in tearless grief. Over all rose the clangor of the alarm-bell, like a wild accompaniment.

At last, with a tremendous crash, the roof fell in. Instantly there surged upward to the sky myriads on myriads of sparks, as if Tophet was vomiting its blaze,

till the firmament itself appeared on fire. The flames, now confined within the solid walls, raged in that narrow circuit, with augmented fury, until, to look at them through the windows, seemed like gazing into a furnace seven times heated. Gradually, however, the conflagration began to die out for want of materials. One by one the crowd thinned off. The interest, to them at least, had terminated. But though the fire smouldered, it was evident it would not soon go out, for the timbers of the galleries, roof and floor lay piled together in an almost solid mass in the cellar, and would burn in that condition all the longer for being so compact.

CHAPTER XIX.

SACKING THE SUBURB.

WALWORTH was still gazing at the ruins, with a sort of sad fascination, when, suddenly, the great town-bell began again its alarm.

"What can that be for?" he said.

"I fear the riots have broken out," answered his companion, "in some other place. They generally rage, when once begun, for several nights. I shouldn't wonder if a second negro church was to burn!"

Just then a cry arose, no one could tell from whence, that the mob was attacking the negro quarter. Had a bird of the air borne it, the news could not have come quicker. Walworth concluded, and not without

reason, that the measure had been pre-arranged, and that emissaries of the rioters had propagated the information through the crowd.

Instantly the great body of the spectators began to stream off in the direction of the suburb indicated, with the suddenness and regularity of a flock of wild-fowls startled from a rock on Labrador.

"Shall we follow?" said Walworth's companion; and seeing that Walworth hesitated, he added, "You, as a Southerner, ought to see it. Besides we may possibly be of service to some poor wretches. It is sufficiently bad when an empty church is burned, but when houses, crowded with women and innocent children are sacked, it is terrible."

"Let us go," answered Walworth; and they set forth.

As they hurried along, the great town-bell clanged sharper and more angrily, and, far and near, the hum of half a million of people in the streets, ascended like the low growl of an earthquake. The City-Hall lay in their way, and, as they passed it, they saw a body of troops collecting in front, and learned that the authorities, early in the evening, had called out the citizen-soldiery, and were mustering the companies as rapidly as possible. Walworth had never seen such an exhibition in a republican country before. But it recalled forcibly scenes which he had witnessed in Europe, and imagined could be beheld no where else, much less in his native land.

Long before they reached the negro suburb, the crowds of people converging to that point, almost blocked up the streets. With difficulty Walworth and his companion forced their way along. But determined to witness the riot in the very vortex of its fury, they

pushed persoveringly onward, and finally, after half an hour's delay, gained the mouth of the cross-street which we have described already as the heart of the black suburb.

Walworth had seen misery and destitution abroad, but had never beheld any thing so bad as this. He had also read of popular emeutes, but had never imagined that a riot could be as ferocious as what he now looked upon. "War," he thought, "even in its worst shape, cannot be half so hideous."

The disturbance had commenced, as he afterwards learned, nearly three quarters of an hour before. The church had scarcely been ignited when a body of ruffians, detaching themselves from the main mob, had ran, whooping and yelling, down the principal streets, taking the direction of the negro quarter. Most of them wore no coats, but only the red-flannel shirt of the northern day-laborer, and many were without even hats. Some boys, and a few women, the vilest, it is to be hoped, of their sex, accompanied this gang. Arrived at the black suburb, they made directly for the street in which Cora had been compelled, by poverty, to seek lodgings.

At first, however, they contented themselves with stoning the nearest houses, or giving chase to a negro, whenever one made his appearance. The blacks, however, had taken the alarm, from former experience, and many had already deserted their houses, while the remainder generally kept close doors, and watched the rioters from between the cracks of shutters. To be disappointed of their prey, however, did not suit the purposes of the mob. From pelting the houses at a distance, they proceeded to a direct assault on the door of one of those nighest, and had already nearly

effected an entrance, when the owner, a ferocious black, with but one feeling left in this hour of peril, and that the instinct of revenge, fired a musket from the upper window right into the crowd. A rioter fell dead, pierced to the heart. With a shrick and groan the mob fell back.

But the repulse was only momentary. A lion, if baffled of its spring, will, it is said, retreat in mortification. But rioters, if strong enough, only gather new savageness from a failure. With a roar like that of the advancing surf, when lashed to its utmost fury, the mob gathered itself up, and poured down in an avalanche on the devoted house. It was sacked almost in a minute. One stunning crash, and the door went in. A single rush, and the tenement was filled. Fifty hands emptied the dwelling of its furniture, smashing the casements, frame-work as well as glass, in their eager fury. Then shutters and doors began to be wrenched off; the ripping up of the shingles followed; the clatter of falling chimney-bricks was next heard; and finally men and half-grown lads, transported for the time into fiends, emulated each other in tearing away the clap-boards and reducing the house to a mere skeleton of timbers. All this time others, and they the most ferocious, had been seeking the master of the house. Fortunately his terrified family had fled, before the shot was fired, and he himself, after the discharge, aware that successful resistance was impossible, had imitated their example. Thus he eluded the search of those thirsting for his blood. Had he been caught and recognized he would have been torn limb from limb, by his brutal and excited pursuers.

But the vengeance of the mob, frustrated of its particular prey, now turned on the whole black quarter.

The entire street was made to expiate the hasty and fatal act of that one man. And the retribution fell on those least guilty. The more vicious characters of the suburb, made cowardly by the consciousness of ill-deserving, had been seized with vague terrors as soon as they heard the church was to be assailed, and had long ago made good their escape. It was only the innocent, like Cora, or weakly old people, or little children, or women too intoxicated to apprehend their peril, or a few desperate, sullen males, that had remained. The others had scattered in every direction, most of them being already miles out of town, crouching in woods, or watching, from secluded elevations, the vengeful fires that they well knew would light up the midnight sky. On the hapless, helpless, hopeless victims left behind the fury of the mob had burst. When Walworth reached the entrance of the street the work of devastation was progressing frightfully. Nothing was seen but furniture flying from the windows; beds, chairs, and tables crushed together in the middle of the street; and frightened, half-dressed women, sometimes leading naked children, flying from the yells of the mob, amid volleys of pursuing stones. Nothing was heard but the crash of houses being sacked, the shrieks of the terror-struck fugitives, the pattering of missiles like a storm of hail, and the wild whoop of the demoniacal crowd.

While these scenes were being enacted in the suburb itself, the streets outside witnessed a stranger, but equally revolting exhibition. Some of the rioters having procured a settee, had placed on it the dead body of their companion, and were now bearing it along in procession, surrounded by torches. A yelling crowd attended, proclaiming what they called the murder of a

white man. This inflamed still further the already excited population. Wherever the bloody spectacle appeared an angry roar arose. Even the more respectable inhabitants, as they beheld it from the side-walk, or threw up their windows to see what caused the commotion, exclaimed, in the horror of the moment, and with the instinctive prejudice of race and caste, that the blacks ought, after such a deed, to be driven, like mad dogs, from the city. Thus the tempest of popular fury raged fiercer and higher, roaring through the length of the town, and whirling up into its angry folds new elements of power and havoc continually.

In this way incessant additions were being made to the numbers and ferocity of the rioters in the suburb. The savageness of the mob, which had appalled Walworth at first, grew more awful every minute. A hapless black, laid up with the rheumatism, and unable to fly, with the rest, at the first assault, was dragged from the cupboard into which he had crawled, beaten with stones, trampled under foot, kicked in the face, and left, at last, apparently dead in the street, his countenance so disfigured with blood that even the wife of his bosom would not have recognized him. A woman, caught flying from a house, which it was whispered among the mob was lewd, was stripped to her last garment, her frock being literally torn from her in shreds, and, in this unseemly guise, buffetted and hooted for the whole length of the street. The brutality of the rioters increasing with what it fed on, they soon ceased to spare any one, even females, against whom no accusations were made. So horrible became their atrocities, indeed, that the few trembling victims of their fury who were left, no longer dared to attempt flight, but cowered in their houses, peeping

occasionally from the windows, hoping, perhaps, that the troops would come to their aid, or that the vengeance of the rioters would be satiated before their dwellings were actually attacked.

But vain was either hope. The great town-bell still pealed and pealed, till the heavens vibrated and rocked, terrified at the clamor. Yet no troops came. Once, it was said among the crowd, a body of cavalry had ridden up and down the contiguous street, the mob falling back to let them pass; but they had not unsheathed their sabres, nor did their commanding officer think it prudent to venture into the narrower thoroughfare, where the principal work of devastation was going on. The expectation that the mob would wear itself out proved as baseless. Steadily and remorselessly it advanced, gutting every house that it approached, and sparing neither sex, nor age. Bleeding, half dead creatures now became frequent, stealing away through the crowd, and glad to escape even with life. Walworth's spirit rose indignantly. Though aware how hopeless intervention would be, he was, more than once, on the point of rushing to the rescue of these victims, when his companion held him back, beseeching him "for God's sake, and as he valued his life" to refrain.

At last one of the rioters, to whom the comparative slowness of the work of ruin was intolerable, cried out not to waste time any longer in this way, but to "burn the black scoundrels alive in their dens." The suggestion was hailed with a shout. Fire was procured, as if by miracle, so speedily did its appearance follow the proposal, and several houses were ignited at once. As most of the dwellings were of wood, the flames spread with frightful rapidity. A high wind assisted

the conflagration. Soon the entire street, from side to side, was a sheet of fire, before which the mob necessarily fell back, retreating up and down the thoroughfare. Occasionally, from some burning tenement, a negro would dart out, preferring to run the risk of being stoned and beaten to death, than to die like a rat in his hole; and the appearance of the fugitive was always the signal for a yell of exultation, and a chase, which often ended in his turning back, and plunging desperately into a cellar.

Suddenly, in the midst of the burning houses, a female form appeared at one of the windows. It was a young and lovely mulatto, evidently a mother, for she held an infant, and seemed, by her gestures, to be imploring mercy for it rather than for herself. Her frantic screams rent the midnight air, as, holding her baby at arm's length out of the window, she cast terrified looks behind, as if at the encroaching flames within, alternating them with glances equally affrighted at the devouring conflagration up and down the street. But no voice of hope answered her from the crowd. Those who were touched by her appeal, if any, were silent from fear of others; and the active rioters only replied by shouts of derisive laughter

Walworth could remain quiet no longer.

"My God, this is too horrible," he said. "I, at least, will help her."

His companion endeavored to restrain him, but Walworth tore from his grasp, and, running the gauntlet of the fiery street, plunged into the house where Cora stood shrieking, and terrified into temporary insanity.

"He will be lost," cried his late companion.

After a breathless minute, and before Walworth reappeared, the roof of the house, as if to verify the

speaker's words, fell smouldering in. Instantly a gush of thick, black smoke, starred with countless sparkles, puffed up to the sky. The tenement was hid momentarily from view. When the smoke had passed, the second story was no longer visible. Of the entire dwelling, only a shapeless, burning pile of timber, about ten feet high, remained.

CHAPTER XX.

CORA AND HER CHILD.

ALL through that hard, protracted winter, Cora remained in lodgings in the black suburb. The season set in early, and with unusual severity. For years there had not been such frequent, nor heavy falls of snow. Month after month rolled by, yet the pavements were still covered with their white garniture, and the rivers yet locked in ice.

The mere item of fuel for his family during that long winter, nearly exhausted the surplus earnings of Charles. The tenement they occupied let in the chill air through innumerable crevices. Cora required a greater degree of heat also than if she had come of a race accustomed to high latitudes, and would often actually shiver in a temperature that a robust Anglo-Saxon would have considered merely bracing. Thus all thoughts of removing to better quarters had to be laid aside, at least until the milder and more genial spring should come.

But when spring arrived there were debts to be paid.

Charles had had to provide clothing for himself out of his scanty wages, and his employer was not satisfied unless it was comparatively elegant. Cora had, at last, obtained some sewing to do, but the sums paid for her work were so trifling as to add very little to their purse. In great cities, the market is always overstocked with females who "take in sewing," as the phrase is, and consequently a remunerative price can rarely be obtained; and the poor unfortunate, who has no additional means of support, is almost certain to starve. Nor could Cora work steadily. Her own health was giving way, under the pressure of anxieties and privations to which she had been unaccustomed; and besides, her infant necessarily occupied a portion of her time.

Often, during that weary winter, the tears would come into her eyes as she thought of Old Virginia. "Oh! had we but staid with young missis," she would say, "we might have been, may be, a help to her as well as to ourselves. I could have got plenty of dress-making to do there, and at good prices, but here they won't employ a colored dress-maker. Charles, too, would have done better. He is breaking down, he is, under his troubles. This has come on us for our sins. I know it has: it is because we left young missis in her sorrow."

The occasional visits that her husband was enabled to pay her constituted her sole consolation. He came even less frequently now than formerly, for the days were short, and his duties severe; and often when his evening to be out arrived, a storm prevented his leaving the house. His constitution stood the winter even worse than Cora, perhaps because he was more exposed. By New Year's an obstinate cold had set-

tled on his lungs, attended by a constant cough, which greatly alarmed Cora, and compelled her frequently to beg him not to visit her if the weather was tempestuous. Yet, if a heavy fall of snow, or a storm of sleet interfered to prevent the expected visit, how utterly miserable Cora was. She had no recourse at such times, but to weep over her baby, calling it by a thousand endearing epithets, and apostrophizing it, the tempest, and her absent husband in succession.

When, however, after counting the hours, Charles came at last, the delight of Cora was unbounded. She forgot every thing then in joy at his presence. Yet even her caresses could not always drive the gloom from his brow.

One evening, as he looked at her and the baby, the tears came into his eyes.

"Cora," he said, "I sometimes think I am not long for this world. In these last six months I have lived years, and I feel as if my time was nearly up. I can't get rid of this cough, do all I can. I'm a'most out of heart. Mr. Owen says the climate's too cold for me, and I fear it is."

The melancholy of the husband affected the wife. The tears rose to her eyes, and dropped thick and fast on her baby. But, unwilling to distress Charles, she turned her face partially aside, so that he could not see her emotion.

"Don't talk so," she managed to say at last, in a tolerably firm voice. "Don't talk of dying."

"I think of it often enough," he said despondingly. "I wouldn't care so much, if I knew what was to become of you, after I was gone."

Cora was now unable to restrain her tears, which

gushed in a torrent, and were followed by loud sobs.

"Oh! Charles," she said, "you'll break my heart."

Many such interviews took place. Ah! how different was all this from the life of ease which Charles had promised himself.

One day he said, "I see no chance of getting a better place for you, Cora, these many weeks. I almost despair. If I had money I'd try Canada, or some of the States further North."

"Don't, don't," implored Cora. "They say it's colder there than here, and that the winters is dreadful, snow often four months of the year. It's a killing you here, and there, I'm sure, you'd die right off. Oh! Charles, don't go North."

Her husband sighed. He mused awhile, and answered.

"A colored man here is worse off than any where else, the Lord knows. At home, if he is a smart boy, he gets to be his master's favorite, and shares his master's respectability. But here, he is only a waiter, let him be as smart as he will."

From such moody fits Cora would manage, with woman's tact, to win him gradually, by getting him to take notice of the infant, pointing out to him how it had grown, and insisting that it already knew more than ever child knew before at such an age. Often she would do it when her own spirits were at the lowest. Often when he had left her, after such interviews, she would spend half the night in tears, thinking of the dreary future, resolving not to give way to fears for her husband's life, yet unable to keep the terrible phantom from rising before her.

Thus things went on till the day of the riot. Cora, secluded in her chamber, heard nothing of the attack on the procession. Towards nightfall, looking from her window, she was surprised to see several of the neighbors moving as if in great haste. Old women staggered along under the weight of beds; children carried chairs; and mothers, leading a little one just able to walk, bore some other article of furniture. She could not entirely comprehend it. But she finally concluded that their landlords had summarily ejected these parties, and that they were using what celerity they could to get into new quarters before night. So she lit her lamp, and as baby was asleep, took up her sewing.

But when, later in the evening, the great town-bell began to ring, and the streets outside suddenly became alive with hurrying feet, and eager voices, a strange feeling of alarm seized her. She rose, went to the head of the stairs, and called to the family living below.

Then, for the first time, she heard of the riot, and learned her probable danger.

"We'se gwine to leave," said the dame, her voice quivering with terror, "for de mob may cum most any moment. An' den sich murderin,' an' burnin' as dar'll be. Lord hab mercy on us!"'

Cora grew faint with alarm. Never accustomed to act for herself, this crisis entirely unmanned her.

"Yer's best jine us," said the dame, kindly, observing her agitation. "Ef de white villins get here, dey'll burn de house ober our head. I'se knows 'em of old, dem chil'n ob de debbil. But dar's a Day of Judgment cumin'; I'se 'most hear de trumpet now, glory to God; an' dey'll git throwed into hell fire

for all dis, whar dey'll gnash dar teeth for ebber an' ebber, deed dey will, bless de Lord!"

Cora hesitated a moment, and then replied,

"No, thank you, I can't go, for Charles, when he hears of the riot, will leave every thing and come at once. I know he will. And if he should find me gone, he'd think I and baby," she said, bursting into tears, "both dead."

"Well as you tinks best, poor woman. But I'se no time to stop now. Yer'se better, I sees, dan most 'bout here, an' ef you do hold yourself high, I can't see yer's burned to death widout warnin' yer. But if you won't take good 'vice," and she shook her head, as if she handed Cora over to a deserved doom, "yer must 'spect to suffer. As yer reap, so shall yer sow."

Cora left the old dame muttering, and hastened back to her baby, who just then stirred and cried. In hushing it to rest again, she forgot her terrors, and when the infant finally grew still, and slumbered, the street without had become so quiet, and the alarm-bell had ceased so long to clang, that she dismissed her late fears as idle. She could not, in fact, realize that innocent beings, like herself and child, could be in peril from the mob.

In this treacherous feeling of security she remained, until the rioters attacked the suburb, and then it was too late to fly, even if she had known where to go. But now that her landlady had fled, Cora had no one to look to for guidance or advice. Besides she continued to believe that Charles would come to her assistance, forgetting that, being confined to his employer's house on duty, he might not hear of the disturbance in time.

But when the rioters actually began to sack the street, yet still Charles did not come, her terror rose, by successive stages, almost to the pitch of insanity. The uproar had awoke the infant, whose cries assisted to distract her. Now she clasped the babe wildly to her bosom, and apostrophized it in the most glowing terms, declaring that wicked men were coming to murder it, but that they should kill her first before her darling should be touched. Now she conjured her husband, as if he could hear her, to come to her relief before it was too late. Now she fell on her knees, and lifting her infant in her arms, frantically prayed for mercy for it, if not for her. She would die, she said, willingly die herself, if God wished an expiation for her sin to Isabel, but the baby, oh! if that could be spared, it was all she asked.

Thus praying, imploring, weeping, apostrophizing, conjuring, lamenting, raving, the half-crazed mother continued until the street was fired, when she lost what little presence of mind had been left, and became, for the time, insane. Terror took all idea of flight from her, even if flight had now been possible. But only one instinct remained, that of endeavoring to save her child, and under the influence of this, she flew to the window, and held the infant out beseechingly to the mob, shrieking as we have seen.

We must now return to Walworth. Scarcely had he entered the blazing dwelling, when, blinded by the smoke, he staggered and almost fell. A heart less brave, or a nature less generous would have fled at once, warned, by this event, of the peril he ran. But the accident only increased the determination of Walworth, for it impressed on him anew the imminent danger of the mo-

ther and child up stairs, by assuring him that, if he delayed even for a minute, they might be suffocated.

Fortunately, at this instant, a puff of wind blew aside the smoke, allowing him to breathe again, and disclosing the staircase. He darted up the latter at once. In the twinkling of an eye he was in Cora's chamber, had dragged her from the window, had gained the head of the stairs, and was about descending, when he saw, by the red, surging flames below, that escape in that direction was impossible. Walworth was not a man, however, to lose his presence of mind. With one blow of his foot, he dashed open the door of the back chamber, actually sending it reeling from its hinges, such was the strength excitement gave him. To cross the room, to throw up the window, and to look out was the work of less time than we have taken to describe it. But even in that period, thought, with its lightning flash, had been busy as to the best and quickest method of getting the paralyzed mother safely to the ground. Fortunately, when he gazed out, he saw that there was a shed, the roof of which, coming close up to the window, sloped off so as to materially lessen the jump to be made. To force the passive Cora out on this shed, to follow himself, and then to swing her, with his stalwart arms, to the earth, was the work of but a second or two. And well was it that all was done so quickly. For scarcely had they reached the ground, when the entire upper story of the house fell in. Indeed as Walworth sprang from the shed, he felt it quivering under him, but, by a tremendous effort, cleared the wreck, and alighted at Cora's side. To hurry her down the yard, and away from the blazing timbers, that fell all around them, was an instinct, rather than a result of reasoning.

When, however, Walworth found themselves safe, Cora and her infant being entirely unhurt, and himself only wounded by having been struck on the arm by an upright, the high-strung excitement, which had carried him through that minute of peril, with an invincible power and rapidity, passed away, leaving him weak and trembling as a child. For a while, as he gazed at the ruins behind, his knees sank under him, and he had to seek support by leaning against the fence. But he did not forget to whom he was indebted for this almost miraculous preservation, and, in that pause of physical weakness, his soul overflowed in such thanksgivings, as only ascend to heaven when we have, as it were, actually hung over the abyss of death, and looked down into the black gulf, yet escaped at last.

Time was precious, however, and Walworth, remembering this, sought for his charge, preparatory to finding means of egress to the open street. Cora had sank down paralyzed, on the bare earth, and had to be roused, and assisted to her feet.

"Collect yourself," said Walworth, "for the life of your child depends on it. I came to save you. I cannot carry two of you, but will take the infant if you will follow me."

The reference to her babe roused her effectually. But she refused, by a gesture, Walworth's offer, straining the child wildly to her bosom.

"This way, then," said Walworth, taking her by the arm, and hurrying her along, "the back fence will yield to me, I know, and that will open an entrance to the yard of the house on the other street. The fire has not yet reached there, and probably we shall meet fewer of the mob in that direction. God be praised, for the accident that drove us this way," he

said, "for if we had taken the other, the rioters would probably have murdered us."

He saw, arranged, and spoke, all at once. As he intimated, and even while he uttered the words, the old, tumble-down fence gave way before his vigorous foot, and the fugitives found themselves, immediately after, in a deserted tenement on the street back of that being sacked. A moment more and they were in the thoroughfare itself, and surrounded by an excited mob, who, at this unexpected sight, gazed an instant in wonder, and then, recognizing the color of Cora, burst into a savage yell, and rushed at her.

Walworth had hoped to have found this street deserted. The conflagration in the neighboring one, he had said to himself, must have attracted all the rioters to that quarter. But when he beheld the narrow alley half filled with a mob, almost as ferocious as that which he had left, and when he saw that, before Cora had made three steps at his side, her color was discovered, and a rush made at her, his heart sank within him.

But it was only for a second of time that this weakness continued. On the instant all that was high and heroic in his soul rushed up from its profoundest depths, and he resolved to save Cora and her child, or perish in the attempt.

"Back, back," he cried, pushing her along where the street happened to be clear, for the moment, of rioters, and covering her retreat with his body. "You pass over my dead body to the child or its mother."

His ringing, excited voice, his flashing eyes, the swelling defiance of his whole figure, though backed by no weapon, produced more effect than a squad of armed soldiers would have done. There is something

in self-sacrificing heroism, which goes straight to the heart. Even the vilest of mankind feel its magnetic power, as reaching down to their inmost natures, it kindles up that fragment of divinity which never deserts entirely the most abandoned ruffian. All saw that Walworth was a white man himself, and that he was totally unarmed; and his generous conduct, not less than his courage, extorted their respect.

"By God, he's a trump," cried one of the leading rioters. "He deserves to get them off for his pluck."

A cheer followed these words. Perhaps, notwithstanding that momentary thrill of admiration, a different sort of speech from this ruffian, who enjoyed a self-elected rule over the mob in consequence of his daring ferocity, would have sealed the doom of Walworth as well as of Cora. But their leader's praise, by sanctioning their better feelings, produced the applauding cheer. Before the huzza had died away, Walworth had turned down a cross-street, and was hurrying Cora out of sight, eager to place distance and darkness between her and the rioters, lest they might repent of their temporary forbearance.

In this object he succeeded. Dragging Cora along, for she was too terrified to move unassisted, Walworth, by turning down the darkest and narrowest alleys he could find, managed to escape notice, and eventually to gain a quiet thoroughfare, outside the boundary of the mob.

A carriage was passing, which he hailed. It proved to be empty, and, without further words, he pushed Cora in, took a seat beside her, and ordered the driver to proceed, by a circuitous route, to his hotel, so as not to pass near the scene of the disturbance. For, as yet, Walworth knew no other place where to

deposit, in safety, the poor fugitives whom chance had thus thrown upon his protection.

Cora had not spoken a word since she left the falling house. She had been, all the while, in a stupor of terror, apparently knowing nothing but that her infant was in peril of life. The first sign she gave of revival from this mental paralysis was to begin frantically caressing the child. Then, all at once, she burst into a flood of tears, started up, and would have rushed from the carriage, if Walworth had not forcibly detained her.

"Oh! take me to my husband," were her words, as she struggled to rise, "they are murdering him."

And as the distant yell of the rioters came to her ears, she cried frantically, struggling away,

"It is their cries as they kill him. Charles, Charles—"

Her words died in low mutterings, and she swooned at Walworth's side.

CHAPTER XXI.

CHARLES IN PRISON.

While Cora was thus suffering from anxiety for Charles, he was not less alarmed for her.

Occupied with his duties, he had heard nothing of the riot until the great town-bell began to ring, at the time of the attack on the church. He then learned, from a servant next door, of the disturbance in the afternoon, and of the threatened arson. But

as yet not a thought of Cora being in peril had suggested itself to him.

When, however, the alarm-bell began again, after having ceased, and the cry spread through the city that the black suburb was being sacked, the danger of his wife flashed on him immediately. He forgot every thing then but Cora. Abandoning his work, though yet unfinished, he ran through the streets towards the threatened suburb.

The assault had been begun long before he reached his destination. He saw the lurid flames, reflected redly from the sky, and heard the shouts of the rioters, while he was still at the distance of squares. The sight lent new speed to his limbs. Though naturally timid, rather than courageous, Charles thought nothing now of any peril he might run himself; for his whole being quivered, as it were, with terror for Cora and his child.

Suddenly he encountered a wild excited procession, composed of men and half grown boys, waving their torches and accompanying what seemed a bier. At sight of him a cry of rage burst from the crowd.

"There goes one of the black villains," shouted a rioter. "Let's catch the murderer."

As the ruffian spoke, he started in pursuit of Charles, followed by a score of others.

The bewildered husband hesitated, for a moment, unwilling to believe that he, who had never harmed one of all that crowd, could be the object of their pursuit. But the menacing cries of the mob soon left him no room for skepticism, and satisfied, at last, of his peril, he fled for his life. Yet fast as he went, the rioters pursued even faster. The course he took led him, moreover, directly towards the burning suburb,

so that in a few minutes he was headed off, forced to double, and finally surrounded.

"Knock him over," cried one of the foremost of the mob. "Tread the life out of him," shouted another. "Give him something to cry out for," brutally said a third. And, with the words, he was felled to the ground, and kicked, and otherwise maltreated, until he believed that his hour had come. In vain he implored mercy. In vain he asked what he had done. Every exclamation he uttered was the signal for a buffet, but secured no other attention. He might as well have sued to tigers, who had tasted blood, as to the rioters.

He would probably have lost his life, as he had begun to fear, if a body of police had not, at that very crisis, come up, at the sight of whom his aggressors fled. Half dead with fright, his face bleeding from his injuries, he was jerked to his feet by an officer, armed with a bludgeon, who cried,

"Ha, we've got one of you, have we? Stand up. You could stand well enough when fighting was to be done."

Charles partially recovering his presence of mind, began to explain, though stammering with embarrassment and alarm,

"I'm not one of the rioters, if you please, massa," he said. "I was going to my wife, when they attacked me."

"Not one of the rioters," exclaimed the officer. "Didn't I see you fighting, you scoundrel, with those who ran away?"

"I was only trying to defend my face," pleaded Charles.

"Don't sass me, you nigger," said the angry officer,

shaking him. "You're one of the head devils, I've no doubt. Come along!"

But Charles held back. "Oh! please, sir," he said, "let me go to my wife. I ain't done nothing, indeed I ain't. She lives in the street they're burning——"

"She does, does she?" cried the officer, pulling him forward. "Yet you've the impudence to tell me you ain't guilty. But we're up to that sort of dodge. So come quietly along, or I'll make you."

But Charles pleaded still. His voice shook with terror, for he half expected to be knocked over with the mace: but he could not, he would not as yet give up Cora.

"Oh! let me go and see," he said. "Oh let me see. I don't ask you not to take me to prison. Come with me first to see if she's alive, and then do with me what you will——"

"Silence," said the officer, sternly. And he shook the mace. "If I hear another word, I'll drop you like an ox. Some of you niggers have been shooting a white man, to-night, and there'll be more than one neck, I guess, that'll stretch for it."

Charles saw that he might as well hope for mercy from the mob as from the police. The latter, in fact, were exasperated by their own defeat, early in the evening, and were in no mood to discriminate between the guilty and innocent. The wounded mulatto was accordingly dragged off to the lock-up, between two stalwart officers, a crowd of boys and idle women following at his heels.

His feelings, as he was thus hurried along, language is too faint to describe. He feared that he would lose his place, in consequence of this arrest. But this evil, great as it would have been considered

the day before, was slight compared with his separation from Cora, and the uncertainty as to her fate.

The lock-up was already crowded with prisoners, nine-tenths of whom were black, the few whites being the most depraved of their race, and such as generally associated with the lowest class of negroes. The air of the room was stifling, the fumes of liquor mingling with the other and even more sickening exhalations. A dim, dirty lamp cast a faint, yellowish glare over the throng, and by this light Charles saw that most of the prisoners were bruised and bleeding like himself, and that some bore even worse marks of misusage. From several, women as well as men, the clothes, never very good, hung in tatters. One man lay, seemingly dead, in a corner. In another part of the room a female, apparently seriously injured, was extended on the bare floor, moaning, and with closed eyes, while a little child, not more than four years old, sat weeping by her side, calling "mammy, mammy," in tones to soften the hardest heart.

There was not, perhaps, in the whole of that stifling crowd, a single person who had been the first aggressor, and few, perhaps, who had been more guilty than the mulatto. But they were the weaker party. They were the outcasts of an outcast class. The police must show their energy by arresting somebody, and hence had haled these poor wretches to prison. What a blessed thing it is to be a free black in the Northern States!

Some such reflection as this passed through the mind of Charles, as he stood looking around him, after having been thrust into this place. He fully expected, however, that his detention would not be long. He could not realize the possibility of a perfectly

innocent man being treated like a proved criminal. But when some time had elapsed, yet no one appeared to examine into his case, he turned to one of the most respectable of the prisoners, and asked how long they would probably be kept.

This person, who was an elderly negro, and respectably dressed, though the clothes were now quite soiled, looked at Charles with some astonishment.

"You're a stranger, I guess," he said, "or you would'nt a axed that. We'll be kept till trial, sartain, sure."

"Till trial," exclaimed Charles in horror. "Why surely," he stammered, "they'll discharge us some time to-night."

The old negro shook his head.

"Catch 'em at that," he said.

"But I'm innocent," cried Charles. "I was chased, knocked down, and beaten; and while still on the ground they arrested me."

"Don't make a bit of difference," said the old negro. "Dey'll tell you dat ef you aint guilty, it'll come out on de trial, an' all be right. I shouldn't wonder," he continued bitterly, "ef some of us were kept in jail as witnesses."

"Not innocent men. Not those they don't pretend to call guilty."

"'Deed 'em does."

"Kept as witnesses. You don't mean that. I thought this was a free State."

"So it am for white men, but not for niggers. Did you eber see a poor black git off, when dey tried him for murder, ef dar was de least chance of him bein' guilty? Or did you eber know a white man to be hung, ef dar was de least chance of gittin' him off?

Dis is berry free country for de rich white man, but niggers, dey's poor debils, an' its nebber free for dem."

"Oh! my God," said Charles, "what will become of Cora, if they keep me to trial. How long is it before a trial comes on?" he said eagerly.

"Neber less dan a month, sometimes longer. But who dat you talk about?"

"It's my wife," said Charles, "and she has a young child, little money, and no friends. Oh! what will become of her if I am sent to jail for trial. But what makes me talk so," he added distractedly, "when, perhaps, she is even now murdered. She lived in the street, which they tell me was burnt. Unless she escaped she is dead."

The old negro shook his head.

"Dar's but one friend de black has here," he said, "an' dat's de Lord. Here am I, bless his name, hab had religion dese twenty years, an' known to plenty of white folks for an honest, peaceable, hard-workin' man, yet when de officers seed me in de crowd, whar I were exhortin' to quiet, dey tuk me wid de rest, laffin' at my word dat I was not one of de mob. Here I'se hab to stay till de trial, unless some friend bails me out, an sartin till to-morrow."

Charles made no reply, but silently wrung his hands. He was at last realizing his condition.

"Hab you no friend to bail you?" said the old negro, who could not fail to see that the mulatto was superior to himself, and much more to the prisoners generally, in refinement and general intelligence. "Are you a stranger altogedder?"

"I am waiter at Mr. Owen's. Besides him I don't know any gentleman I can call on."

"'Tain't no use callin' on him," said the old ne-

gro decidedly, "unless you hab known him a long while."

"I've only been with him since fall."

"'Tain't no use den. Ef a colored man gits into a scrape, his character's gone, even ef he ain't guilty. To hab been in prison is enuf. Ef you was to go back to-night, an' Mr. Owen know'd you'd been here, he'd turn you away, widout a word, 'deed he would! I knows 'em well."

Charles, unused to trials like this, and naturally wanting energy, gave way as if he had been a woman, big silent tears chasing each other down his cheeks. The old negro regarded him compassionately.

"Trust in de Lord," he said at last, "my young broder, it's de only consolation poor folks has. 'Tink not of de jail below, but of de New Jerusalem above. De pavement dere is of precious stones, de palaces of gold, de black man dar wear de white robes of the Lamb, all de same as oders. Ef you're wife am dead, she gone to glory, I hope; an', ef dar, she happy. Glory to God dere's a place whar free colored folks can git justice at last. But dat isn't all. Dar's a place whar d' oppressor, an' de proud man, an' de unjust judge, an' all dey dat wrong de poor, will burn in brimstone an' fire for eber an' eber, an' call in vain for a drop of water to put on de parchin' tongue."

But Charles only wept the more, turning his face to the wall. For, alas! *he* had no religion to console him. The old negro, seeing that his words afforded no comfort, heaved a sigh, and betook himself to what, he knew from frequent trial, would be more efficacious, to fervent prayer.

Ye wise ones of the earth, who would have scorned to take that poor old black by the hand, some day

ye will learn that he had a talisman in that religion of his which surpasses all your boasted philosophies. He did not expect it, as some of ye skeptically and mocking ask of it, to redress the wrongs of this life, for that it cannot do till all men become the followers of its founder; but he knew that it brought strength to the weary heart, when the deep waters of trouble rose and threatened to overpower it, and that it would conduct the prayerful, trusting soul, at last, to that better world beyond the grave, where sorrow and sighing shall be no more, and where there will be neither oppressor nor oppressed.

After awhile Charles, turning to the old negro, said,

"Is an innocent man ever found guilty?"

"Often," was the reply. "Whar's de poor colored folk to git money to pay lawyers? An' how can a prisoner, dat don't know any ting, 'spect to git off, when dar's de States 'Torney to talk agin him, wid all his college larnin'? Dar's only one time when a nigger gits his rights in de court, an' dat's when he is took up for a runaway, for den all de abolition societies send dar lawyers, an' he is de talk of de town, who but he? Yet 'pears to me 'twould be as Christian in dem to help de free black man sometimes, 'specially when dar false charges brought agin him, as dar is ebery day. But de Lord will make it all right in his own good time. We must hab patience."

"But surely," said Charles, "they can't do any thing with me. Every body must have seen that I only defended myself."

"Dunno," replied the old negro. "Who's to hunt up de witnesses for you? 'Spose, too, de officers swar dey saw you in de mob; tink de jury 'll care much

wedder you were bein' beaten, or was a fightin' yerself? Not dey."

"Oh! I wish we were at home in Virginia," said Charles. "We'd get justice there."

"Wha' dat you say?" interrogated the old negro, with increasing interest. "Hab you run away?"

"Yes," said Charles. "I thought that every body here was the friend of the colored man. That work was plenty and wages high. That one could live twice as well, and be master of his own time, doing nothing when he pleased, and only working when he was in the humor."

"An' you hab found out de mistake?"

"Indeed I have," said Charles.

"You must hab had a good place, for you aint like common niggers here."

"I had. Ah! I shall never see such days again."

"What made you run away?"

"Massa died, and I was afraid I'd be sold to some stranger, and parted from my wife."

"And she came wid you?"

"Yes. But we might as well have been parted in Virginia, for we can't live together now. And to-night she's right in the midst of the riot, as I told you, and perhaps murdered by this time." And Charles, at this picture, again broke down.

"You's been berry foolish, I 'spec," said the old negro. "I neber was a slave myself, but I'se seen plenty as was, an' mighty few, I'se tell you, dat's good for any ting, but say dey's worse off here dan when dey were at home, in de South. 'Cept some lazy, good-for-nothing niggers, dat lib on stealin', an' a few dat been berry fortunate, dey's all 'knowledge dat dey made a mistake. Dis is no place for a colored man

to come to, dat's sartain sure. De berry people dat talk so much 'bout de slaves South, do nothin' for a poor starvin' nigger here; but tell him to go an' make a libin, which, de Lord knows, is easier said dan done."

A hundred times, during that night, Charles wished that he had never left the Old Dominion. "Oh! I see now," he said, "that Uncle Peter was right, and that God is punishing me for having deserted young missis. 'Be sure,' he said, 'your sin will find you out.' And it has found me out. Lord," he exclaimed, in agony of soul, "have mercy on me."

Early the next morning, the prisoners were crowded into a van, and carried off to jail. Charles was one of the first thus despatched. Just before he was summoned, the old negro, who had meantime procured bail, came to take leave of him.

"Trust in de Lord, broder," he said. "In dis world we must 'spect trials, but, if we lub de Saviour, we shall git to glory at last. So trust in him, an' he'll make it all right, if not here, den in de heavenly Jerusalem. I'se gwine, to-day, right off, to see 'bout your wife. Ef she's alive, I'll find her out, an' git word to you."

Thus Charles was indebted to this poor old man for almost the only act of kindness he had received since coming North. Thousands were ready to admit, as an abstract proposition, that he was "a man and a brother," but nobody was willing to come forward and act towards him as such.

The cell into which Charles was thrust was a Paradise, in comparison with the lock-up from which he had been removed, for, though small, and scantily furnished, and with walls bare, it was both neat and

well ventilated. Some good, wholesome food was brought to him immediately, for he had been nearly famished at the lock-up. But he had no appetite. He sat down, and tried vainly to take some nourishment, but every time he put food to his mouth, he thought of Cora, as perhaps dead, and his emotions choked him. At last big, heavy tears began to roll, one after another, down his cheek. He was completely subdued. Throwing himself on the cold floor, he sobbed as a child sobs in its first grief, his whole frame being convulsively agitated.

CHAPTER XXII.

REQUIESCAT IN PACE.

WALWORTH did not fail to call upon Horace, on the morning after the riots, as he had promised. The lad seemed better than on the preceding evening. The good Irish woman was in extravagant spirits, declaring that now the "dear child would get well and be an honor to the counthry yet, she was shure he would."

The medicine did, indeed, seem to have worked wonders. Horace declared himself that he felt better than he had for a long time. On Walworth's entrance his countenance brightened up, and he began immediately to talk of home, but especially of Isabel. He wanted so much, he said, to get well enough to write, for he feared they would be anxious. "Did Mr. Wal-

worth think it would hurt him to sit up in bed, and write a few lines?"

But Walworth shook his head. The hired nurse was even more positive. Horace sighed, and the look of concern, which Walworth's entrance had dissipated, once more settled on his countenance.

"Shall I write for you?" said Walworth. "You can tell mo what to say."

Horace seemed lost in thought a moment, with his eyes closed. Walworth waited awhile. The nurse repeated his question, speaking in her shrill, piercing voice.

"No, thank you," said Horace, rousing. "I'll surely be better in a day or two."

The nurse smoothed down the quilt, and resumed her seat at a little distance. Horace, after a few words with the washerwoman and Walworth, seemed inclined to sleep, when the latter, promising to call again about the time the physician was expected, took his leave.

The doctor was just departing when Walworth arrived again, and the two met on the stairs.

"How is our little patient?" said the latter.

The physician shook his head, at which the countenance of Walworth fell, for he had been buoying himself up, all the morning, with the prospect of Horace's recovery.

"No better then?" said Walworth, dejectedly.

"None. Much worse."

"Why, doctor, he seemed so well this morning," said Walworth, and then he rehearsed to the physician the events of the interview.

"The nurse said that you had deceived yourselves. But she is more experienced. It was but a temporary rally, produced by the medicines I administered. If his

stamina was not all gone, they might have carried him over, but there is no constitutional strength left, and he has fallen back immediately. It's like a horse that feeling the spur, tries a leap, but hasn't muscle to clear the fence." The doctor was a famous sporting character. "I speak frankly to you. I wouldn't take fifty to one on the poor child's life."

"Yet if you had been called in time you might have saved him, you think? You said this, I believe, last night."

"I have every reason to conclude that I could have raised him, for the fever was but slight at first, the Irish woman says. I know exactly the type. A little rest, nourishing food, and kindly faces around him would have saved his life."

"Can such things be credible? A child actually murdered, in a great city like this, for want of rest and food."

The physician, with all his eccentricities, was a kind-hearted man. But long custom had made him comparatively callous to these things.

"My dear sir," he said, and he shook his head sadly, "I could tell you tales that would make your very hair stand on end with horror. Tales of whole families dying of typhus merely from destitution. It isn't often I see such sights now, except when I happen to fall in with some poor devil; but I know, from my younger brothers in the profession, that they occur almost daily. Not less than a hundred people annually perish, in this way, in this great city, positively killed, sir, by anxiety, bad food, and insalubrious lodgings."

Walworth made no reply. But, in his heart, he said, "How long, oh! Lord, how long."

"I will come again, about evening," said the physician. "I should like to see him at that hour."

Horace was awake when Walworth entered. As in the morning his eye brightened at seeing his visitor, whom he welcomed in quite a tone of joy. But, after the first moment of excitement, Walworth was saddened to see that worn, anxious look come back to the countenance. He turned to the other two occupants of the room to see if he could read, on their faces, any tokens of their opinion. The nurse, however, was impassable. But the eyes of the washerwoman were swelled and red, as if she had been weeping in secret.

When Walworth left, the latter followed him out.

"The poor, poor lad," she said, wringing her hand, and bursting into tears, "he'll niver git well now. It's more and more that he sleeps, and talks wilder all the time; and the nurse says his pulse is getting irregular; and sometimes he dozes with his eyes half shut—oh! it's the death-mark, that same."

"Let us hope for the best," said Walworth, and struck by her affection for the lad, he added. "You seem to love Horace very much for a stranger."

"Oh! yer honor," was her reply. "No one could have known him as I did, without the love for him getting strong in her heart. He was so gentle, yet brave, and so good too—it's he that's shure of heaven, if ever any one was. The blessed angels are waiting for him now."

Walworth's thoughts were on Horace all that day. The worn, anxious face of the lad haunted him continually. Towards sunset he bent his steps again to the sick chamber.

The nurse was not in the room, having gone to seek

some rest. The Irish woman had evidently been weeping frequently, and Walworth's appearance was the signal for her eyes to fill again. Horace lay in a stupor.

"How is he?" whispered Walworth, as the washerwoman offered him her chair. But his heart failed him as he asked the question. The hopes with which, notwithstanding the physician's opinion, he had been deluding himself all day, had sunk the instant he saw the invalid.

The good creature shook her head.

"There's no hope now, if there was even a bit," she said, "when yer honor was here last. See, he can't stay at the head of the bed, but slips down; I have to lift him back as often as he wakes. When they do that the nurse says it's a shure sign."

Walworth took his seat by the head of the bed. It was a calm, sweet evening, one of the balmiest of the season, and through the open window, afar off, and over the tops of the subjacent houses, was seen the bright, green country. A gentle breeze blew in, redolent with the smell of grass, and waters, and budding trees, and gently lifted the damp curls of the little sufferer.

Presently he stirred. He opened his eyes, and looked with a vague stare at Walworth, then at the washerwoman, but did not recognize either. He felt the sweet, cool breeze on his cheek, however, and it gave direction to his wandering fancies.

"Isabel," he said, speaking disconnectedly, "let us go down to the woods. We'll gather flowers. I know where such pretty violets grow."

"It's the delirium on him," said the Irish woman, dropping on her knees, "puir, puir child," and she

began to pray earnestly, but silently, at the bedside, looking at him with eyes full of tears.

"He's dreaming he's at home," whispered Walworth. "Don't let us disturb the illusion."

As he spoke, his own eyes filled, for Walworth, like every true heroic soul, had a heart tender as a woman's.

"Why don't you come, sister?" said the boy anxiously, looking from Walworth to the kneeling woman, and turning from both with an air of disappointment. "The sun is almost down."

Nothing could excel the pathos of that plaintive tone. It was as if the woes of a thousand children, the lonely death-beds of a thousand friendless orphans, had united to deepen its sadness.

"Ah! I remember," sighed the sufferer, at last, half rousing to consciousness. "Isabel isn't here. She's away. In Virginia. There's nobody here. I'm all alone. And sick. Yes! very sick. Oh! if I die, what will become of them."

He looked imploringly from Walworth to the washerwoman, as he spoke, his voice full of the agony of heart-broken disappointment. The latter could contain herself no longer.

"Don't you know me, Horace?" she said, with a choking voice. And she rose and stood by his side.

But he shook his head.

"No, you are one of the wicked people who made us poor. Go away." And he faintly endeavored to push her off.

At this impulse, and these words, the faithful creature could not contain her sobs.

"Don't you know me either, Horace?" said Walworth, hoping to rouse the lad out of his delirium. "I

DEATH OF HORACE.

am Mr. Walworth, who is to go with you to see Isabel, you recollect, don't you?"

Horace regarded him for a moment, but then answered, shaking his head.

"You are one of the bad men. You make slaves of white children—poor orphans—and work them to death. You promise falsely." And, as he proceeded, and this idea seemed to possess him more forcibly, he cowered to the other side of the bed, adding, "I've often seen you in my dreams. Go away. Go away. Oh! sister Isabel," and his appeal was mournful enough almost to break a listener's heart, "Take this bad man away."

Walworth, torn with grief and anguish, moved out of sight; and after a few moments the invalid became more calm. The washerwoman had sunk again to her knees, praying with tears of passionate woe. Walworth, leaning against the wall, at the foot of the bed, prayed also; and his prayer was that of the Litany, that God would not forget "the fatherless children and widows, and all who were desolate and oppressed."

As if in reply to these petitions, the delirium of the lad now took a less painful form. He babbled of green fields, brooks, a pet poney, flowers, and all beautiful things pertaining to a prosperous and happy life in the country. Isabel was now again in his thoughts, the centre around which all else revolved. He was talking to her, he was waiting for her, he heard her voice and paused to listen, she was coming out with little Alfred, she was dressed for her birth-night ball, she was bidding him farewell and claiming his promise to read his Bible and not forget his God. The whole drama of the past was being

played over again in his delirium, but it was the drama with all that was painful mercifully left out.

Suddenly a ray of sunshine shot aslant into the window. Its warm touch on the cheek of the invalid was like a mother's soft kiss. Some such fancy seemed to strike him, for a smile came to his wan face, and he murmured,

"Good night, mamma." Then fainter, "Kiss Alfred for me." And he turned his head aside, as if to compose himself to a night's rest, still sweetly smiling.

In doing so, however, the motes dancing in the sunbeam met his eye. With a low, light musical laugh, the laugh of happy childhood, he said,

"Mamma—the bridge of glory—that angels—go up and down." And, after a pause, he murmured, "I should like—to go to heaven—on it too."

Then he said some words, which the weeping listeners failed to make out. After awhile, he spoke more connectedly again. Walworth, stooping down, caught the following,

"Good night, sister. If God should call me—in my sleep—don't let—mamma cry——"

The rest was lost in low, broken whispers. And thus, with that sweet smile still upon his face, he sank into slumber. Both Walworth and the washerwoman were weeping, but silently, and with a sort of happy pain. Neither could have spoken had worlds been the reward.

Gradually the sun sank behind the house-tops, sank behind the distant hills, and twilight, dark and vague, filled the room. Yet still the watchers wept in silence.

Suddenly the door opened, and the physician came in.

"How dark you all are," he began, but stopped as

he saw the invalid. With a noiseless step he advanced to the bed, gazed into the face of Horace, and added, in a voice full of awe, "Yes! it is the darkness of death."

CHAPTER XXIII.

CHARLES SET FREE.

WALWORTH was sitting, with others, in the smoking room of the hotel, after dinner, when one of his companions said,

"Why so serious, to day, Walworth?"

Walworth, startled from his reverie, answered,

"I saw a sight, last night, to make me serious."

The whole group looked up, at this remark, with curiosity and inquiry on their countenances.

In a few, sad words, Walworth told the story of Horace, and described the scene he had witnessed the evening before. At its conclusion, a Kentuckian, who was present, and who had listened to the tale with an agitated face, exclaimed,

"He was foully murdered, more foully than if he had been worked to death, as they say negroes are in Cuba. Yet you talk to the South about cruelty to the slave." And he looked defyingly around the circle.

"It is a harrowing case," said a Bostonian. "I don't pretend to excuse it. Still, it is not the fault of the system, but of the particular employer."

"My God," said the Kentuckian, starting to his feet, "is that the way you shift the responsibility from your

shoulders? I don't know how to answer you, sir," he continued excitedly, resuming his seat, after a turn or two up and down the room, "but I feel that you are wrong. I can hit a squirrel better than I can chop logic. There's Mr. Walworth though, he can reply to you."

The company, as by one consent, looked to Walworth.

"The death of this child," said Walworth, thus appealed to, addressing the Bostonian, "is not, you assert, the result of your system, but of the particular employer. Let us see if you are consistent. Pray, what would you say if a negro child died of being torn from its parents, starved on insufficient food, and worked to death?"

The New Englander colored, for he saw the home-thrust, but answered, nevertheless,

"I should say he was murdered.

"Would you say he was murdered by his employer, or by the system of slavery?"

"By the system of slavery."

"Why?"

The Bostonian was *au fait* in all the arguments of modern abolitionism, having long had a leaning that way and read every thing on that side. He answered promptly,

"Because the law allows it. When the law don't interpose to prevent a crime, it's no use to say the guilt is that of the individual; it is that of the whole community, sir, until the law is altered, and the crime prevented."

"Then," said Walworth, "your whole community, by the same argument, is answerable for the death

of this lad. For the law allows such crimes to be perpetrated. The whole North, then, is guilty alike.

"Sir, sir," said the Bostonian, flushed with indignation, and starting to his feet. "Do you mean to call me a murderer? To say that I shared in the guilt of destroying this child?"

"I do not mean to be personal in my remarks," courteously replied Walworth. "But I retort on the North the sort of logic it employs against the South. It is a daily occurrence for slave-holders to be called murderers, because occasionally a slave is over-worked by some brutal master. When we reply that we are as good citizens, as kind superiors, and as sincere Christians as yourselves, you reply it can't be, because we permit a system to continue, under which such things are possible. Now, I say, it is just as fair for us to turn on you of the North, and declare you all equally assassins, because grasping, heartless men in your midst grind down poor operatives to the starving point, or murder them as this child was murdered."

"That's just what I wanted to say," exclaimed the Kentuckian, "only I didn't know how to go about it."

"Moreover," continued Walworth, "it ill becomes the North, when such atrocities are perpetrated within its own borders, to undertake a crusade against the South, on account of real, or supposed social evils existing there. What said Christ, when the woman, taken in adultery, was brought before him? 'Let him that is without sin cast the first stone.' Yet the North, with thousands of Pariahs, both white and black, left to grow up neglected, especially in its great cities, so that it educates them, as it were, for the gallows, dares to say to the South, 'Stand aside, I am holier than thou.' Is it to be wondered at that these things

exasperate Southerners? Can you be astonished that it rouses the retort? 'Physician, heal thyself!' In fact, this strange discrepancy, between your practice and profession, causes, among irreligious Southerners, a reaction which makes them go to the length of defending even the evils of slavery. In every way, therefore, modern abolitionism is wrong. It is illogical, it is unchristian, it is impolitic, and it wears the look, at least, of being hypocritical."

"We can't reform our system," said the Bostonian. "Such evils as that which you complain of—such things as the death of this child—have existed in all civilized countries, and will to the end of time."

"That justification you won't allow in the case of slavery. You can reform as well as we can. For it is easier to talk of getting rid of slavery than to do it. Emancipation is hedged round with difficulties."

"What are the difficulties you allude to?"

"I will mention a few," answered Walworth, "the first question to be asked is, 'What is to be done with the blacks when freed?' Can you Northerners help us to solve that enquiry?"

"Let them come North."

"Not till they are better treated," replied Walworth. "Not till you cease leaving them to grow up to indolence and every description of vice. Not till you protect them, by the strong arm of the law, against outrages like this late riot. By the by," he said, rising, "if you have time, to-day, the best way to convince you, will be for you to come with me. I am going to see if I can't get a mulatto discharged, who was brutally knocked down by the mob, and then arrested for being engaged in a riot. Chance made me acquainted with his case. But for this accident,

the poor fellow, being friendless, would have remained in jail for trial, and might then have been convicted, merely from the lack of means to defend himself. We will take the black suburb in our way, part of which, you know, was sacked the other night."

The Bostonian hesitated a moment, and then said, "I will go."

Although the riots had terminated scarcely twenty-four hours, the low taverns, which studded the negro quarter, were already opened again, and crowded with customers. Walworth and his companion paused opposite to one, and watched the stream of persons, composed of both sexes, that passed in and out. Within sight no less than three girls, partially nude, and intoxicated to stupefaction, lay on the side walk. The dirt, the raggedness, the pestiferous air, and the lewdness and blasphemy of speech were all there just as we have described in a former chapter. The riots had only terrified this outcast population away for a while. At the first lull in the storm, it had returned as foul and reckless as ever.

"You see now what the North does for the negro," said Walworth. "You have no place like this in Boston, I grant. But it is because you have few blacks there. Pour twenty thousand Africans into your city, to fight for bread against Yankee competition, and the destitution would be worse."

"But poverty need not cause things like this," said the other pointing to the tavern.

"Beggary and degradation go together," said Walworth. "What these people want are habits of industry. They tell me that most of these tall, athletic fellows, whom you would suppose could work all day, go forth, in the morning, and earn their shilling, or

maybe, more, and then return here to spend it in rum. Their lives are wholly sensual. The profligacy among them is horrible. Their philosophy seems to be, 'eat, drink, and be merry, for to-morrow we die,' if indeed they ever think of death."

"But surely they don't all come to this?"

"No, not all, but the majority. He must be a strong-minded man, or have particular advantages, who can resist being drawn into this moral maelstrom. Shall we free our slaves if they are to come to this?"

The Bostonian was silenced. Walworth continued.

"If the South was to emancipate, and send its negroes North, this city, from lying comparatively near the frontier line, would have its hundred thousand, perhaps more, of this sort of population, while the State would be literally run down with them. You may imagine what a sink of disease and crime it would be. Your own town would then be like this is now. You would be eaten up, morally and financially, with this cancer."

"We would defend ourselves by doing something to elevate this population."

"No, or you would do it now. Instead of doing this, most Northern States treat the free colored man worse now, than they did a generation ago. Pennsylvania has taken from them the privilege of voting. Indiana won't let them enter her borders at all. And the more Northern States, after inciting them to run away from the South, leave them, as yet untaught to swim, in this black gulf, where they are sure to sink. You tread these indolent, thoughtless people under your heel, and then say it's their own fault they don't get out of the way. You call them free. Oh! no, sir, it will

never do to emancipate our slaves, with the prospect of their coming here."

"To tell the truth," said the Bostonian, after a pause, "I don't honestly believe it will. The maxim with us is, that he that won't work must starve, and it is a maxim too deeply rooted in the character of our people, ever to hope for its being dispensed with in favor of the negro, or any one."

"God help the black, in the Northern States, then," replied Walworth. "He must perish in the struggle. Die out like the red-man, or sink to the besotted, degraded, semi-savages we have just seen."

By this time, however, they had regained the more respectable portion of the city, and now Walworth entered a handsome dwelling, the lower story of which was occupied as a lawyer's office. A fine-looking gentlemanly man, about the middle age of life, rose to receive them, exclaiming, "Good afternoon, Mr. Walworth, punctual, I see."

"Yes," said Walworth, introducing his companion, and then proceeding at once to business. "And may I hope you will be as punctual, Mr. Attorney General, in discharging this prisoner? The proofs I laid before you, if you have had time to read them, will have shown that he had nothing actively to do with the riot."

"I have looked at them, Mr. Walworth," replied the Attorney General, "and am quite satisfied. The man will be discharged this afternoon. He owes his liberation entirely to you, however, for we should have kept the poor devil to trial, if you had not interfered for him."

"Then my business is finished. Your time is too valuable for us to trespass on it. Good evening."

The lawyer would have had them stay, but Walworth persisted in going. He accepted, however, an invitation to dine with the Attorney General, who declared that he must see more of his fellow-traveller, for he and Walworth had met, the year before, in Italy.

"This is another specimen of the working of your laws and public opinion in reference to the negro," said Walworth, as they walked down the street. "Had Charles been thus foully maltreated and afterwards imprisoned, at the South, it would have afforded staple for a dozen tracts against slavery. But here the thing does not wake a regret even from so generally benevolent a man as my friend the Attorney General."

The joy with which Cora and Charles met after so many perils, must be left to conjecture. Through Walworth's aid, for he never did a kind action by halves, Cora had been supplied with lodgings in a comfortable room, in a back street, not far from the hotel. Here it was that the rescued wife and liberated husband met, and spent the evening in recounting their mutual terrors, and praising their common benefactor.

For Walworth it had been who discovered the arrest of Charles, as well as procured evidence of the manner in which he was attacked. It had been Walworth also who had cheered Cora, during those two days of suspense. And though Charles had lost his place, as he expected, through Walworth's influence he was received as a waiter at the hotel.

Cora would have gone to the prison, on learning of her husband's arrest, but Walworth would not permit this, aware, as he was, that she might only be insulted. In every way, therefore, he had been a counsellor and friend.

CHAPTER XXIV.

FRATERNAL STRIFE.

THE day following the release of Charles was that set aside for the funeral of Horace. It took place at the expense of Walworth.

The grave of the martyr-boy is in a beautiful cemetery, a few miles out of town, where the birds he loved so well sing over him, and the bright waters sparkle in the valley below.

Walworth spent the evening, after the interment, in writing to Horace's family. He had learned from the lad, in that first interview, of the interest Dr. Worthington took in them, and to him accordingly he addressed a letter, containing an account of the lad's death. In this epistle he enclosed another to Mrs. Courtenay herself, which he begged the doctor to deliver personally, in order to break the sad news to her. For Walworth thought, and thought truly, that the mother would desire to have for herself a narrative of Horace's last moments, in the handwriting of a spectator.

Of the remoter causes of the lad's death Walworth said nothing. He knew it would only increase an anguish that would be sufficiently acute without it. For the same reason he abstained, likewise, in his letter to Dr. Worthington, from speaking of the penury in which he found the lad, or of the assistance he had rendered him.

The next day, the Bostonian and several others met again, as on the preceding one, in the smoking room. A general feeling seemed to prevail that the discussion of the preceding day had been only postponed, not terminated, and that it would be resumed on this occasion. But Walworth, at first, felt no disposition to enter into conversation. He was spiritless and sick at heart. It had seemed to him, both at the funeral, and since, as if this world's wrong and cruelty were never to have an end; as if philanthropy, so called, more frequently attacked the lesser evil, and neglected the greater; and as if there was no hope consequently, while human judgment continued so fallible, of the improvement of mankind.

But, while he sat, moody and despondent, the conversation had already begun.

"Are you not satisfied," had said the Kentuckian, addressing the Bostonian, "that the North is no place for the negro, after seeing the degradation of that black suburb, and the results of these horrible riots?" And the Bostonian had answered evasively, "We have no negro riots in Boston."

It was this last remark which had aroused Walworth. He looked up, with a smile, and said,

"But you have other riots. Witness your burning of the Charlestown convent. Once fill your town with negroes, and the same prejudices would arise as here, and with like results."

"Well, then," said the Bostonian, "keep your negroes at home. Emancipate them there."

"Do you expect us to do every thing?"

"Yes," was the reply, "it's your sin, not our's."

"You are inconsistent with yourself," answered Walworth. "At one time you justify Northern agita-

tion on the subject of slavery, by saying that it concerns the whole nation. But when we ask you, then, to bear your share of the load, you reply, as now, that it is not your sin, but our's. This is disingenuous. Do one of two things. Either let us alone, or help us like brothers."

The Bostonian was abashed. He really meant well, and was ashamed of the attitude he stood in. He stammered at last,

"But why not keep your slaves to work your farms? Somebody must do it."

"I answer that question," replied Walworth, "by pointing to Jamaica. However else people may differ about the results of emancipation there, on one point all are agreed, because the facts cannot be gainsayed; and that is that the end of the experiment will be the entire abandonment of the island to the blacks. For that conclusion the British government is already preparing. And the same results would happen in the South. In Virginia, Kentucky, and probably a few others of the more northern states, the whites might retain their supremacy, but the cotton-states would exhibit the spectacle of Jamaica over again. The negroes would refuse to work, except as it suited them; the crops would, half the time, be spoiled; the planter, in the end, would be ruined; the estate would go out of cultivation; and the whole region thus gradually be abandoned by the whites. It would take a generation or two to do it; but the thing would inevitably occur. It's a simple rule of three."

The company seemed staggered by this view of the case, for few of them had ever regarded the subject except from one side. The Bostonian, however, who had now recovered courage, said, after awhile,

"But the negro will work. Necessity will compel him to it, as it compels the operative here."

"Excuse me, sir," answered Walworth, "but I find you know nothing of the African character. As a general rule the negro will *not* work, in the sense in which you mean. He is content with little, and, in a warm climate, where food grows spontaneously, will be quite satisfied with a pumpkin or a plantain, nor ever care to aspire after higher things. For centuries on centuries Africa has remained stationary, and at the very lowest stage of civilization, but one remove indeed above brutishness. Back to that merely animal existence, too, the Jamaica blacks are fast retrograding. The American negro has been in course of redemption from this low type, ever since he came to this country; and some have acquired already sufficient energy, perseverance, providence, self-reliance, and ambition to enable them, if freed, to keep rising; but the great mass are still so undeveloped that emancipation would throw them back into utter barbarism, as a child, made to stand before its bones have hardened, becomes distorted in limb for life. Were the slaves to be set free, to-morrow, the mass of them would become moral vagrants, living on game, stealings, a bit of garden-land, any thing but systematic labor. The result would be, as in Jamaica, and by the process I have already mentioned, the gradual impoverishing of the planters, till finally the country would become a wilderness, with a semi-savage black population."

"For my part I am satisfied," said one of the gentlemen. "I wish such a man as you, Mr. Walworth, could go through the North, in the track of

abolition lecturers. I think you would set public opinion right pretty soon."

"We Southerners," replied Walworth, "are not robbers and murderers, but Christian men. We shed our blood as well as you of the North, in the great struggle which made us an independent people. But, when the war was over, we found a social system around us different from your own, and one that, I don't deny, has its evils. We have endeavored to work out our own problem, in an honest and kindly spirit. We have elevated the negro, made him a useful member of society, and assisted very materially to increase the wealth, advance the dignity, and sustain the commercial balances of the country. But we do not as yet see the way clear to emancipate our slaves. We behold only ruin to ourselves in the prospect. We see also that a fatal blow will be struck at the exports of the nation. Finally, we perceive no substantial benefits accruing to the negro, but a positive evil from his relapse into barbarism. Against all this there is but one advantage to be weighed, and that is emancipation. Emancipation which is only altering the relations of capital and labor; improving them, at best, by but a single grade; and leaving the negro, in many practical respects, worse than before. Count the benefits of emancipation as far greater than they are, and then deposit, in the other scale, the evils to the negro and to ourselves it will cause, and see which will kick the beam. In a word, gentlemen, the North and South stand thus. You are willing to do nothing but abuse us. You won't even buy our slaves. We, on the other hand, are ready to emancipate, as soon as you show us that, by so doing, we shall not sa-

crifice both ourselves and our country, to say nothing of the negro."

"For my part," said another of the group, "I shall insist, hereafter, on letting the South alone. We must agree that they know their own social system best, what to do with it in the way of improvement, and when to act. To interfere is to call in question their honesty and capacity. For one I shouldn't choose to be interfered with, in the management of our social system North, by a Southerner, in the style that Garrison interferes with the South."

"Those are my sentiments," was the general cry. The Bostonian alone was silent. He smoked awhile in silence, and then said to Walworth.

"What do you propose to do then, at the South? Emancipate after awhile?"

"For one I can answer yes," said Walworth. "I regard slavery as the rudest of the relations between capital and labor. It is fit only for that state of society where the master is highly civilized and the slave is at the bottom of the human scale, and the fitness ceases as soon as the serf progresses in developement. All history shows this, for slavery has existed, in every age and nation, and has invariably died out when its full time has come. Generally it terminates by ceasing to pay. Often it ends by the servile class becoming sufficiently advanced to assume the higher relation of a laborer, paid in money; but then, whenever the operative is not provident enough, this higher state crushes him remorselessly. The time will arrive I believe, when the social system of the South will thus work itself clear of slavery; but it will take a long while; the sore,—I call it such to meet your views of it, sir,—must suppurate in its own way, and

the more you irritate it from without, the longer it will take to heal."

"There's nothing more to be said on that subject, I take it," said one of the company rising. But his departure was arrested by the question asked, at that moment, by another.

"What do you think of colonization, Mr. Walworth?" was the interrogatory. "You appear to have digested this whole matter so thoroughly."

"Few Southerners but have," was the answer. "Of colonization there is this to be said, that it holds out the best means of Christianizing Africa, and of developing the negro race generally. As long as the black remains in America, in States where he is numerically inferior to the white, he must occupy a secondary position. Give him equal privileges with the white, a thing you do not do even in the North, and this would still be the case, for he can't stand in a fair, open rivalry for wealth or influence with the Anglo-Saxon. As long as he remains a separate race there would be secret bitterness between the white and him. Such is the unbroken experience of history in all similar cases. From this there are but two ways of escape, colonization or amalgamation. Colonization is, therefore, the only road practicable, for amalgamation, even if it was not repugnant, would lower the high standard of the white race, and swamp our career of progress forever. Go to Mexico, if you doubt this, and see how the Spaniards, once so noble a race, have sunk, by intermarrying with the Indians there, which was a more civilized race, in many respects, than the African ever was."

"But colonization is impossible," said the Bostonian.

"All things are possible to God," solemnly answered

Walworth. "Who would have believed, ten years ago, that Ireland, before 1852, would lose so much of her Celtic population as to render the loss of the whole of it a probable event, to be discussed in Reviews, and assumed by statesmen? Yet this thing has happened. Who, five years ago, would have credited the man, who should have foretold the California and Australian emigration? Believe me, if God designs colonization to be the end of American slavery, we shall see it made manifest in his own good time. The blacks may not all go to Africa. The West Indies may be the asylum of most of them, for, as I said, the end will be their sole ownership of all those islands. But abolitionists should be the last persons to cry down colonization, even if its continued impracticability was proved, for they insist on immediate emancipation, which, when the consequences are considered, is just as impracticable. The true way for all is to wait till the clouds clear. We are now in Egyptian darkness as it were. All we know is that God leads our country by an especial Providence, and that the pillar of fire will appear in due time."

"You are the best defender of your cause I ever heard," said the Bostonian, himself shaken in opinion. "I should like to hear you and Garrison publicly discuss this question."

"Pardon me," replied Walworth, "but I must decline the honor. Mr. Garrison starts by assuming the whole South to be man-robbers and hypocritical Christians. I can have no discussion with an antagonist, who forgets the first axiom of religion, charity to others. As well might I call the entire North 'the brotherhood of Satan,' I use one of his phrases, because illegitimate and outcast children are left, by

the negligence of some, the direct agency of others, and the indifference of all, to grow up, amid poverty and vice, into thieves and assassins. As well might I stigmatize my fellow citizens on this side of the Potomac as 'the spawn of hell,' I use his phraseology again, because they allow orphan lads, like Horace Courtenay, to die by slow murder. Such charges are not only unjust, but they actually prevent persuasion. Nay! they exasperate North and South against each other to such a degree, that the two great sections of this nation, if this conduct is persisted in, will come in time to be more irreconcilably hostile than ever were Rome and Carthage. God knows, if this agitation is kept up, the end will be a scene of horror at which the world will recoil, a scene of fraternal strife, in which all the evils of a servile, will be added to those of a civil war."

The Bostonian threw down his segar impetuously, rose, and clasped Walworth's hand.

"My dear sir," he said, "when I began this conversation I was an abolitionist. I am one no longer. I deplore slavery as much as ever, but I am convinced that, as yet, there is no practicable method of getting rid of it, at least on the extensive and summary scale I have heretofore imagined. To use a theological metaphor, and I do it with all reverence, the African must work out his own salvation; *we* can't do it for him."

"I rejoice that my words have had this effect," answered Walworth, warmly returning his grasp. "I speak only what I think truth. God is my judge that I feel for the whole human race, black or white, and seek but the true final interests of all. If I

am wrong, the Judgment day will reveal it; and the awful penalty be mine to pay"

"That's better Christianity, I see it now," replied the Bostonian, "than to do as the abolitionists do, who forget entirely Christ's warning, 'Judge not, that ye be not judged.' But we hear only one side of the question in New England, and, when that happens, any sort of delusion may arise."

"Abolitionism is as hostile to the republic, it seems to me, as it is to religion," said another.

"Yes! to free the slave," said a third, who had been a silent listener all through, "modern abolition throws overboard the Bible and Constitution alike; sets itself to know more than all ages and to be better than even God's martyrs; and cares for no horrors of internecine war, no depth of pecuniary ruin, no gulf of barbarism into which the African might fall. Was ever end so disproportioned to the price to be paid? What horrible madness?"

CHAPTER XXV.

THE SNOW STORM.

We left Mrs. Courtenay sitting, hopeless, helpless, almost frantic at the absence of Isabel, yet not knowing what to do.

Suddenly there came a knock at the door, and without reflecting that Isabel would scarcely thus herald her return, the mother hurried to welcome her.

But instead of Isabel there entered the solid frame of

Dr. Worthington, enveloped in a huge over-coat, and his ears tied up in a woollen comforter. The doctor came in stamping the snow from his feet and clapping his heavily gloved hands together.

The words of gratulation died on Mrs. Courtenay's tongue. She staggered back.

"Oh!" she said at last, in answer to the doctor's stare of surprise, "I thought it was Isabel."

"Isabel!" cried the doctor, looking hastily around the room. "What's the matter with Isabel? Is she out in this terrible storm?"

"She hasn't come home from school yet. Oh! doctor," she exclaimed, clasping her hands, "I'm afraid something has happened to her. What, what shall we do?"

"Look for her at once," answered the energetic physician. "But you surprise me. Isabel not home. She ought to have been here an hour ago."

"She must be dead. I know she must."

"Not so bad as that, I hope," said the doctor cheerfully. "But not a moment is to be lost. I waste precious time while I talk. Don't despair, my dear madam. I'll bring Isabel back to you directly, my word for it."

It did not take the doctor long to reach the village tavern. The group of idlers were all in commotion when they heard of Isabel's absence. He ordered his horse to be put to the chaise immediately, and sent around the neighborhood for lanterns and volunteers.

"I'll go to the school-house at once," he said, "for it is possible she may have remained there, fearing to venture out into the storm. But as there is not much probability of it, the rest had better follow on foot, so as to be ready to begin the search, if she is not at

the school-house. My old mare will take me there and back, by the time you get fairly started."

"In my opinion she has attempted to come home, by the foot-path through the wood," said the landlord, "and in that case, she may have fallen into the creek and been drowned."

"God forbid!" ejaculated the doctor.

"Nothing is easier," retorted the landlord, "than to mistake an air-hole, in a snow-storm, for solid ice."

By this time the chaise of the doctor was ready, and, having lighted its lamps, he started immediately. In less time than we take to describe it, his equipage, moving off at a rapid trot, was lost in the tempest.

"It's been a long while since we've had such a storm in these parts," said one of the volunteers. "It looks like old times, Stowe, don't it?"

"It's very bad on the rheumatiz," replied the person addressed. "I almost wish I'd staid at home."

"Shame on you," said a big, bustling woman, his wife, who had braved the tempest, to see the party start. "I'd go myself, Johnny Stowe, if you were to stay back. Think of the young lady, may be lost in a snow-drift, or drowned in the creek."

Before the party had fairly cleared the skirts of the village, the doctor was seen returning, urging his mare to her most rapid speed.

"She's not at the school-house," he said. "And she must have left it, some time, for the fire's gone out entirely."

"We knew she wasn't there," said the landlord, who had assumed the leadership of the party, "as soon as we saw the chaise."

"What was that you were saying, before we started,"

asked Dr. Worthington, breaking a momentary silence, "about a foot-path across the fields?"

"I said most likely she had taken the short cut home, and had been drowned in the creek."

"Then," replied the energetic doctor, "the right way is to begin at the stream, and hunt its banks, up and down, to see if there are any traces of her. If she has fallen in, the ice will be found broken. Perhaps, too, as the creek runs through the wood, and the fall of snow is checked there, her footsteps may not yet be entirely obliterated. Here, White," and he addressed one of the men, "jump in and drive my mare to the shed of the blacksmith's shop ahead yonder, where she'll be sheltered. We may want her if we find Miss Courtenay. As for me I intend to lead the search."

He sprang out, as he spoke, and taking the lantern of the man he had addressed, started off immediately, at a quick walk, shaming the rest by the vigor with which he tramped through the snow.

"This is the wood, I suppose" he said, jumping a fence, and coming down into a drift that rose to his middle. "Follow your leader. Here, boy," this was addressed to a negro in the company, who looked woefully at the drift, as if meditating an escape, "over with you, or———"

The rest was lost in the whistle of the gale. But it had answered its purpose. The servant dreaded the doctor's look more than he feared others' oaths. Over the fence he went, blundering headforemost into the dry snow, which rose in clouds around him.

"Ugh, ugh," he said, staggering to his feet, blowing the snow from his mouth. "I'se a most choked, deed I is."

But he met no sympathy. On the contrary a hearty laugh followed his words, from those nigh him, for most of the company were already far in advance, struggling and wading through the drifts, in close emulation of Dr. Worthington.

The storm had not lessened in the meantime. It still raged with a fierceness almost unknown in that region, the snow whirling and tossing, and the wind blowing with a violence that sometimes prevented the party, for a moment, from making headway. Nothing was to be seen around but the white, ceaseless descent of the flakes. Nothing was heard but the howl of the tempest. All traces of the foot-path, which the landlord now averred he was following, were obliterated.

"I don't wonder she lost her way," said the doctor, "if she started after the storm came up."

"She did that, there's not a doubt," replied the landlord, "for my children came home two hours ago, and that's a full hour before the snow began to fall."

"What could she have been doing there?" testily said the doctor. "She had no business to stay. She might have seen the storm coming up."

"She often has to stay, the children tell me," replied the landlord. "And as for seeing the storm come up, Lord knows, doctor, it's looked like storming for a week past, yet we've not been afeard to send our children out, or go out ourselves. But here's the creek."

The stream was about ten feet wide, but it was now frozen solidly over, nor could the closest scrutiny reveal any thing like an air-hole. Dispersing themselves up and down the banks, the party now searched long and carefully for foot-marks, but without success. At last the doctor, who had gone over the entire ground once already himself, said,

"It's no use examining here any longer. Either fresh snow has obliterated the impression of her shoes, or she has not crossed at all. In either event we only waste precious time by lingering here. My proposal is that we now pass the brook, and extending our line so as to sweep as much ground as possible, without losing sight of each other's lanterns, make for the school-house. The landlord will keep in the centre, and follow the path as near as he can. It is my belief that Miss Courtenay has become bewildered by the darkness and tempest, and lost her way; for a person, under such circumstances, may traverse even a twenty acre field for hours, without ever getting out of it. If any one finds traces of her let them halloo."

The proposition of the doctor was at once acted upon. The party extended to the right and left, and began immediately to advance. "No time is to be lost," said the doctor, "for if she has sunk down in the snow, wearied out, death will soon terminate the tragedy. Look sharp. Forward."

Slowly the anxious band traversed the bleak space before them. The wind blew wilder and wilder; the snow often dashed right into their faces; huge banks of drift frequently almost prevented their advancing; and occasionally the lights of all, but that carried by the particular person, were lost sight of in the tempest. Yet bravely they struggled on. Now and then a slight elevation, on which the snow had become heaped up, deceived them for a moment; and once the landlord shouted, thinking he had found the body, mistaking a huge log for it.

At last, through momentary openings in the storm, the school-house was discerned. The heart even of

the doctor failed at this sight. He paused, and looked back.

"Could any have missed her," he said, "if she had been in sight?" But he saw, at once, that this could not have happened, when he noticed the careful manner in which each was conducting the search.

When the school-house had been gained, they gathered, in a melancholy group, around the doctor, each asking, by looks, what was to be done, though expressing, in the same manner, his belief in the hopelessness of further action.

But the doctor, whatever misgiving he felt at heart, showed nothing of it in his countenance. He spoke cheerfully and briskly at once.

"We shall only get chilled, by standing idle, gentlemen," he said. "She may have wandered to the extreme right or left, and most likely has. We must examine every inch, from the high road back, before we give it up. Wouldn't that be the word if it was a wife, or daughter of our own?"

"The doctor's right," said the landlord. "Disperse again, and more to this side, gentlemen. Think of her mother at home."

In silence they resumed their examination. The doctor's hopes sank lower and lower, as the scrutiny progressed; for he knew that, even if Isabel should be discovered, it might now be too late. "God help poor Mrs. Courtenay!" he ejaculated.

Still the tempest went on. The snow was perceptibly deeper than when they had first come out, and was falling with the most frightful rapidity. Frequently the doctor noticed that one or another of the party had set down his lantern, for a moment, in order to warm his hands by beating them against his sides.

"Ah!" he said, "it wouldn't take long to benumb one of us stout fellows: what chance of life is left, then, for a delicate creature like her?"

And now they were approaching the wood again. It is true the trees were not as yet visible through the storm, but from the length of time which had elapsed since they had left the school-house, the doctor knew that the end of their journey in this direction was close at hand. "It is all over," he mentally ejaculated.

Suddenly, clear and high, came the sound of the landlord's voice.

"Hillo, hillo," it said. "Here she is. Hillo!"

In an instant the doctor had traversed the distance between him and the landlord. If he had been gifted with wings he could not have come quicker. The rest of the company hurried up almost as fast.

Yes! it was Isabel. There she lay, cold and statue-like, her form entirely buried in the snow, and only her face exposed, the bonnet having protected that. The landlord held down his lantern, and flashed the light full on her eyes, but they never winked. She was immoveable and rigid as a corpse.

"We are too late," he said. "God have mercy on us."

The heart of the doctor, who had just come up, was nigh bursting at these words. But he answered stoutly,

"No, she can't be dead. Let me feel her pulse. Lift up her head—carefully," he added, and he dropped on his knees in the snow.

By this time others had come up, and stood, with eager, yet awe-struck faces, watching the physician.

"Does she breathe?" said one.

"Hush," said the landlord, in a whisper, "you disturb the doctor."

During almost a full minute, not a muscle of the physician's face moved. With mouth firmly set, yet nostril dilated with the intensity of his interest, he knelt there, his finger on the pulse. But the delicate vein gave back no throb. The tears began to gather in his eyes, the big heart to swell up into his throat, when suddenly he fancied he felt a slight pulsation. But when the next should have come, there was none; he saw he had been deceived; and his emotion again made a child of him. All at once, however, and just as he was about to drop the wrist in despair, a distinct, yet tremulous throb was felt, and then a second, a third, and a fourth. The revulsion of feeling completely unnerved him. A gush of tears rolled down his checks, and his voice, though joyful, was husky, as he cried,

"She lives, she lives, thank God!" And with the words, he began violently to chafe her hands with snow. "I'll fetch her around yet."

"Hurrah!" shouted the landlord, swinging his cap into the air, with the hand that was unoccupied, "hurrah! hurrah! Gentlemen, I'll stand treat all around after we get home, by the Lord I will!"

Nor was the excitement confined to these two. All present participated in it, each exhibiting his emotion, like the doctor and the landlord, in some characteristic way. Not a few wept, for they thought of their own dear ones; one or two laughed in a sort of hysteric joy; and an old negro, falling on his knees, shouted "glory," that being the only safety-valve he knew for excitement of any kind.

Directly the doctor looked up.

"Gentlemen," he said, "for Heaven's sake, don't stand there looking on, but be doing something. Some of you make for the road, find my chaise, and bring it close to the fence. Hillo, when you get there, to guide us. I will lift her up, for she must be carefully handled. We must get her home as soon as possible."

The orders of the physician were attended to immediately. Fortunately they were nearer the highway than they thought, so that the chaise was soon ready, and, in a minute after, Isabel, still insensible, was borne into it. The doctor supported her in his arms, while one of the party drove.

"Lay on, lay on!" cried the doctor. "Why don't the mare go faster?" She was going, even as he spoke, at a tremendous pace, considering the depth of the snow. "Whip her to death, but get it out of her."

Now when we consider that, after his wife, the doctor was supposed to prize this mare beyond any thing in the world, this declaration may be regarded as exhibiting, in his most emphatic way, the anxiety he felt to be at Mrs. Courtenay's. His faithful beast, as if aware that life and death hung on her, traversed the road with amazing celerity, and was soon at the destined haven.

At the sound of the driver's voice, checking the mare with a "who-hoa," Mrs. Courtenay flung open the door, and appeared with a light. She had been, indeed, watching at the window, ever since the doctor left, so that not a second had been lost in admitting them. But on seeing the lifeless form of Isabel, she let fall the candle, shrieked, and rushed forward.

"Keep her away, for God's sake," cried the doctor,

"or she'll kill her child." This was addressed to some of the female neighbors, who had come to watch with Mrs. Courtenay. "Make way for me. No, not that hot lounge. The coolest room in the house is what I want."

As he spoke, he descended gently from the chaise, and carrying Isabel as carefully in his arms as if she had been a new-born infant, entered the chamber of Mrs. Courtenay on the right of the sitting room. Having deposited her on the bed, he turned to the women, and said,

"Now bring me some snow, that's it, cover face and all. It's our only hope of resuscitating her. The pulse is almost gone again. What the devil's the use of the nerves of the brain," he added, "paralyzing so quickly."

But Mrs. Courtenay could now be no longer restrained. She forced her way into the room, exclaiming,

"Oh! Isabel, Isabel, where are you? I knew that school would be the death of you. Let me see my dead darling," she cried, struggling with those who would have held her back. "I will see her, I will kiss her dead lips."

Dr. Worthington came forward. "My dear madam," he said, taking her by the arm, and leading her up to Isabel, "your daughter is not dead, but will soon be, if my directions are not implicitly obeyed. You are too much agitated to assist us. Leave us, and I stake my life on restoring her to you, before long. Stay, and you will probably prevent our success, and be her murderer."

As he concluded he led Mrs. Courtenay away; handed

her over, at the door, to a neighbor; and returned to superintend the work of resuscitation.

"Her skin begins to redden," he cried joyfully. "Now for a dry bed, and some old flannel to chafe her with. Good neighbors, be quick. Ah! she is coming round."

Guided by his energy and skill success was certain, nor was it long before the news that Isabel was reviving had spread to those in the next room, and thence throughout the village, for the whole place was alive with eager interest by this time. Finally the doctor himself came forth from the chamber. Advancing to Mrs. Courtenay he said, in a voice full of emotion,

"Isabel is saved, my dear madam. She that was lost is found, that was dead is alive again."

It was not till long after, however, that Mrs. Courtenay was allowed to see her daughter. But when they did meet, the sight brought tears into the doctor's eyes, the second time that night, unused to weeping though he was, and accustomed to scenes of tender joy as well as of sorrow.

It was quite a week before Isabel was sufficiently well to resume the duties of her school. The depth of the snow would, however, have prevented the pupils, for some days, getting there themselves, so that there was comparatively little time lost in this way.

Dr. Worthington reached home, about dinner-time, the day after the rescue. His wife had been anxious at his absence, physician as he was, so she welcomed him as fervently as if they had been married but a week. Besides the good doctor was one to be loved, more and more, every day.

But when he told her how he had spent the pre-

ceding night, she kissed him anew, again and again, exclaiming joyfully,

"What a blessed thing it was I didn't get my wish. I was hoping, all the afternoon, you would come home early, and was half out of humor when night arrived without you. But the hand of the Lord," she added devoutly, "is in it all. If you hadn't been kept away you wouldn't have discovered dear Isabel, or if you hadn't been a doctor you couldn't have brought her to."

"You've an excellent philosophy, Mary," said the doctor, kissing her. "I wish every body had it. It's a sort of practical 'All's for the best,' which I would the whole world could feel."

"It's not philosophy, but religion, George," she answered solemnly.

"All the better then, Mary. The gospel of Christ, after all," he added seriously, "is better than a thousand philosophies."

CHAPTER XXVI.

THE LETTER.

"SOMETHING must be the matter with Horace, I know there must," said Mrs. Courtenay, one day. "It's been so long since we heard from him."

Isabel had been anxious about her brother for more than a fortnight. It was now over six weeks since she had received a letter from him, and so long a pe-

riod had never elapsed before. In the interval she had written three times without success.

Even the letters which had come to hand in the winter had never entirely satisfied her. Horace maintained what seemed to her a studied silence respecting his prospects. The questions she asked on these points remained unanswered. The tone of his epistles also had gradually become more sad. There was no complaint. But a subtle melancholy, which, perhaps, only a sister could have detected, ran through every line.

And now came this long, long silence. What could it mean? Horace must be sick. And to be sick among strangers, with no loving hand to smoothe the pillow, or bathe the brow, or cheer the lonely hours, oh! Isabel could conceive what that must be.

Never before had she longed so intensely to be rich again. If she had possessed the means, she would have gone North immediately, in order to remove her suspense, or nurse Horace if he was ill. But not only was her purse exhausted, they were actually in debt to the store. Besides it was impossible for her to leave the school. The journey was not to be thought of seriously.

Often she lay awake, late into the night, thinking of all this, till the consciousness of her helplessness became intolerable. No one can understand the agony of this feeling until they have experienced it. Of all the horrors of poverty it is the worst to a refined or loving heart. To know that a life, precious to you beyond measure, is in danger, because you have not money to secure proper medical attendance, or to carry you in person to the sufferer, is like being shut up

between iron bars, within sight of a drowning child or wife, and whose every cry for aid you hear.

Such agony was Isabel's now. The vision of her brother, sick and perhaps dying, vainly stretching out his little arms for help, was continually before her. It followed her awake. It haunted her asleep. She dreamed continually of children in extremity, and under circumstances of utmost horror, children starving in lonely deserts, children worked to death on treadmills by cruel men.

She could afford her mother, therefore, no real consolation. But she expressed a hope she did not herself feel, by answering,

"It may be that the letters have miscarried."

"No, no," said Mrs. Courtenay, "for it never happened before. I'm sure something has occurred."

The answer of Isabel was prevented by the entrance of Dr. Worthington, who had driven up unnoticed, and, fastening his mare to the gate, now appeared.

Isabel saw, at once, that he was the bearer of evil tidings, for his usually cheerful countenance was full of sorrow. Instantly she thought of Horace.

"Oh! doctor," she cried, springing forward, and catching his great palm between her hands, "what is it?"

Mrs. Courtenay, too, arose, alarmed by the manner of Isabel, quite as much as by that of the doctor.

"Tell us at once," she said. "Is it about Horace?"

"It is," said the physician.

"Is he dead?" whispered Mrs. Courtenay, with white lips, as she stared wildly into the physician's face.

Isabel did not speak. But her large eyes were

distended, her lips parted, and she shook as if in a fit of ague.

"He is very ill," replied the doctor, gravely, looking from one to another. "I fear you must prepare for the worst."

Isabel grasped his hand, as if in a vice, and said hoarsely,

"He is dead, isn't he? Oh! don't deceive us."

But the doctor made no direct reply. His eyes filled, as he answered, in a thick, choking voice.

"The Lord gives and the Lord takes away—"

But the rest was lost in a piercing shriek from Mrs. Courtenay, after which she fell senseless to the floor.

It was well, perhaps, for Isabel that her mother's situation demanded all her energies. For hours they despaired of Mrs. Courtenay's life. All this time the daughter watched by the bed-side, concealing her own grief, and personally seeing that Dr. Worthington's directions were faithfully carried out.

At last Mrs. Courtenay, who had been, for the time, insane, grew more composed. But now, though she no longer raved about her "dead child, her murdered boy," as she called him, she mourned of him continually, blaming herself for having consented to let him go North, and saying, "if she could only have seen him before he died, though but for a moment."

Alas! had the whole truth been known to the afflicted family reason would have fled for ever from the weaker mind of the mother. Nor would Isabel's stronger intellect, perhaps, have been able to withstand the shock.

Isabel seized the first opportunity, when she saw the doctor alone, to inquire the particulars of Horace's

death. The doctor acquainted her with all that he knew, and then gave her Walworth's letter to himself to read, as well as the one directed to her mother.

"Isn't it odd, doctor," she said, a day or two after, "that we have nothing from Mr. Sharpe, Horace's employer? Mr. Walworth is an entire stranger, yet we are indebted to him for all that we know; and, from the manner in which he writes, though he says so no where in words, I suspect he was poor Horace's closest friend, perhaps his only one."

"I will write," said the doctor, "and ascertain more, if I can."

But though the doctor wrote, he obtained no further decisive intelligence. Mr. Sharpe returned, for answer, that the lad had been discharged from his store, long before his decease, and then added some courteously sympathizing regrets at the death of one so young. "But what is our loss," he wrote, "is the child's gain." What wonder that the impulsive physician threw down the epistle with something like an oath!

Mrs. Courtenay continued, in a precarious condition of health, for some time. Isabel, between grief for her brother, attending on her mother, and the duties of her school, was nearly exhausted. It needed all her trust in Providence, indeed, to enable her to sustain this triple burden.

When her anxiety for her mother was removed, in consequence of the recovery of Mrs. Courtenay, Isabel's sorrow became almost overpowering. Her thoughts, no longer diverted from the subject, dwelt on it continually. Her health gave way again. A slight cold, the result of being caught in a shower as she returned from school, brought back the cough which had alarmed her

mother so much in the winter. A constant depression of spirits was the consequence. She lost all energy, going about her duties listlessly and as if every thing was a task.

Occasionally the doctor, on a Saturday afternoon, would stop at the cottage, and insist on her taking a ride with him. But it was not always he could make it convenient to do this. He became himself really anxious about Isabel. He prescribed medicine for her, insisted on her going out, and tried other methods to rally her spirits, but without success.

"Heaven only knows, Molly," he said to his wife, one evening, as he sat at the tea-table, after a hard day's ride, "what will become of Mrs. Courtenay and the child, if they should lose Isabel."

"Is she no better?"

"No. She makes no complaints. But what with grieving for Horace, and slaving for bread, she is fast getting into that low, nervous state, which will make her food for any epidemic that comes along, if it does not carry her at once into a consumption."

Meantime Isabel's pecuniary troubles were increasing. The debt at the store grew larger, instead of being reduced. She never could pass that way without a blush of shame. When she thought of another winter, she saw no hope of recovering herself, but only a certain prospect of sinking deeper and deeper into the gulf of poverty.

She had but one comfort, and that was in the assurance of another world, where, at last, repose and peace would be found. The Bible had long been her sole reading. For already the great sorrow of her young life had taught her, what many do not learn till

late in years, that the Word of God can alone afford consolation to the wearied and way-worn soul.

She would often give up in tears. Then her Bible, occurring to her, she would read a chapter, fall on her knees, and, pouring out her soul in prayer, rise with new vigor.

CHAPTER XXVII.

THE INTERVIEW.

SPRING was fast deepening into joyous summer. The cattle browsed, knee-deep, in clover; the wheat-fields began to look luxuriant; the corn was showing itself above the ridges; and the violets, even in their most favorite nooks, were giving way to later flowers.

All Nature was happy and gay. Yet sorrow still oppressed Isabel. The thought of her idolized brother, never more to be seen again on earth, was continually with her, filling her eyes often with sudden tears, and making her long, oh! how frequently to be with him in the grave. At times the yearning for him became almost insupportable. She could not yet realize his death. It seemed utterly impossible to her that the bright, high-spirited boy, whom she had parted from only a few months before, was never more to return to them. "It cannot, cannot be," she would sob.

One afternoon, on leaving school, this grief rose upon her so overpoweringly, that she could not return

home, for she studiously avoided exhibiting emotion there, lest it might increase her mother's sorrow. She turned aside, consequently, and took a bye-road up into the hills, intending to walk until composure returned to her.

The beauty of the prospect, and the fresh, bracing air gradually tended to soothe her grief. The valley below was, indeed, so lovely, that no one could look upon it long, without a portion of its own peace and calm infusing itself into the soul. The verdant, wooded hills enveloping it, like an emerald setting; the alternate brown and green fields; the white village in the centre; and the sinuous stream, glittering, like a steel necklace, through the whole length of the level land:—these formed a picture, which, seen under the soft light of a June afternoon, Claude himself could scarcely have rivalled. In the distance, where the valley, following the course of the hills, wound out of sight, a delicate purple haze hung over the landscape, like the vapor of richest wine.

As Isabel gazed upon this scene, feelings of happiness, such as she had not experienced for months, stole upon her. She had been so long confined to the dull routine of her school, that thus to sit, high above the world below, feeling the cool, invigorating breeze blowing about her, and listening to the forest trees waving above, was in itself alone bliss. She did not forget her brother. But she ceased to think of him as shrouded and coffined. He now rose before her, with a countenance of celestial beauty, walking in green pastures and by pleasant waters. When, at last, the sun, descending towards the west, began to deck the clouds with all the colors of the prism, it seemed as if she saw the very gate of glory, and might expect, at almost any moment, to

behold him appear in it and beckon her to follow. A holy transport succeeded her dark night of grief. Involuntarily she exclaimed,

"I will cease to weep for him. He is where sorrow and sighing are no more." And she repeated almost unconsciously, "And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes."

The frame of mind in which she descended to the valley, and sought the village was, therefore, comparatively joyous. Alfred was watching for her, and as soon as she came in sight, hurried to meet her.

"Oh! Bella, what do you think?" he said. "There's a naughty man in the parlor making mamma cry."

Isabel grew pale, and her limbs trembled under her. The sunshine went out from her soul, and the old sorrow returned darker than ever. Here was some new trial before her, yet she felt that the time had almost past when she could meet trials, that all must soon be over at this rate. But, in a moment, came the reflection that every thing depended on her; and rallying her desponding heart, she walked briskly forward, and entered the parlor.

The cool air had given an unusual color to her cheek, while the excitement produced by Alfred's words, had imparted added brilliancy to her eyes. She was thinner than in the days of her early beauty, but her figure was still exquisitely graceful. The responsibilities of the last year had brought out all that was noble in her character, and stamped it on her face, so that, if the girl had formerly been lovelier, there was now more to worship in the woman.

Mrs. Courtenay was weeping bitterly. A gentle-

man, comparatively young, and of striking personal appearance, as Isabel thought, even at first glance, sat by her. He raised his eyes as the light, yet hurried foot-fall met his ear, with a glance of curiosity and respect, that deepened instantly to one of such evident admiration, that Isabel's gaze sank blushing before it.

"My dear," said Mrs. Courtenay, "this is Mr. Walworth, who was with Horace——"

She could not go on. A flood of tears poured from her eyes, and her sentence ended in convulsive sobs.

Isabel herself staggered back as if a shot had struck her. The first sight of the last friend of her darling brother would, at any time, have affected her, but it was so utterly unexpected at this particular juncture, that her face grew ashy pale, and her limbs nearly sank under her.

Walworth sprang at once to her assistance. But she recovered her fortitude immediately, and extending her hand, welcomed him, though with tears in her eyes. Her low, mournful voice, as she spoke, had a tone that went direct to Walworth's heart: it so forcibly recalled the melancholy cadence of the dying boy.

"Oh! Isabel, Isabel," exclaimed Mrs. Courtenay, through her tears. "I know he caught the fever by going North. I never wanted him to go. It was entirely against my judgment."

The daughter's face quivered with agony at these words, for she knew she had used all her influence, to obtain her mother's consent for Horace to leave home.

"Why did I let him go? Why did I let him go?" cried the frantic mother, all whose grief was now renewed.

"Dear mamma," said Isabel, and her very voice

seemed full of tears. "These things are all in the hands of Providence. It was done for the best."

"Oh! if he had but died at home," cried the distracted mother, "I could have borne it."

This seemed too much for Isabel. Tears gushed to her eyes, and her lips quivered. But she turned to Walworth, who, during this distressing scene, had appeared totally occupied with Alfred, and began to converse with him, in order to divert, if possible, her mother's thoughts. Their guest saw her motive, and lent himself to aid her, secretly admiring her wonderful self-command. But still Mrs. Courtenay continued to weep. Isabel watched her with anxious affection, till, at last, the mother's agitation became so excessive that she was forced to leave the room. Then the eyes of the daughter again filled. She ceased talking, and, for a moment, there was silence.

At last she looked eagerly up.

"Tell me all," she said, breathlessly, "every thing —tell me while ma is away."

Walworth, thus conjured, drew his chair near, and told her, not every thing, oh! no, for at the end of his recital she little suspected the care and anxiety, the want of proper food and proper lodgings, which had laid Horace on a sick bed. Walworth dwelt only on what could gratify a mother's love, or sister's pride, on the noble, unselfish character of the boy, on the kind-hearted landlady, on the celestial visions of the final hour, and on the green, rural grave where he reposed, in the midst of all that he would have loved so much if alive.

Isabel listened with averted face and fast falling tears, till, at last, laying her head on the table, she sobbed audibly.

"Oh! Horace, Horace, my brother," she cried.

Walworth arose, and bending over her, took her hand, saying with emotion,

"God help you, Miss Courtenay. But this is a sorrow in which a stranger intermeddleth not."

His voice grew more and more broken as he proceeded; and when he closed a hot tear dropped on her hand. Believe us, that tear carried sympathy quicker and more surely to that sister's lacerated heart, than if the most eloquent words had been spoken.

Her confidence was gained at once. She felt as if she could talk to him of Horace as she had never talked to any one yet.

"If he had but died at home, as mamma says," she sobbed, "I could have borne it better."

"But have you not faith to believe that all these things are wisely ordered, Miss Courtenay?"

He spoke gently, as a woman would; kindly, as a brother might; and his very tones, much less his words, were never forgotten. It seemed to that poor, bruised, almost broken heart, which heretofore had had to bear every burden in secret, that the voice of sympathy and consolation had reached it at last; and, even amid its anguish, a gush of divine peace welled upward from unknown depths of happiness in her soul.

She had remained with her head bowed on the table; but now she looked up. Her eyes were irradiated, through their tears, with a sweet calm.

"God forgive me," she said, "but I sometimes have felt as if I had lost all faith. I will do so no longer. Heaven is a home at last."

The soft expression of her face, as she spoke these words, was as if a ray from the celestial world had lighted on, and transfigured it. It was a look which

recalled to Walworth the countenances of virgin saints, such as he had seen, sometimes, in Catholic churches abroad, countenances in which all that is noble, heroic, pure, and divine, is idealized by the pencils of Raphael, and other immortal interpreters of spiritual beauty.

Mrs. Courtenay now entered, appearing quite calm. Walworth had again to admire the self-command with which Isabel directed the conversation into another channel. Again he lent his best powers to assist her, and this time with more success. He lingered until it was quite dark, and, when he departed, rode homewards full of thought.

He recalled all that Horace had told him of that beautiful, noble-minded sister, of her accomplishments and sacrifices; and he said to himself, "He did not exaggerate. I no longer wonder at his affection for her."

It was long after dark when Walworth reached the place of his destination, which was the mansion of Gen. Randolph, situated about ten miles from the village. Walworth was a relative of the general, and had been promising him a visit, ever since his return from Europe. He had arrived some days before, and had seized the opportunity of being in the neighborhood of the Courtenays, to pay a visit, which he considered a sacred duty to the dead, if not to the living.

"Where have you been so late?" was Mrs. Randolph's question, as Walworth entered the house. "We began to fear you had lost your way."

"I could scarcely do that, when I know every foot of ground, for miles around. You forget," he added,

smiling, "how many pleasant hours I spent here when a boy."

"Naughty truant," said Miss Randolph, tapping him affectedly with her fan. "You'd make a pretty cavalier, leaving us distressed damsels here, ever since dinner, alone."

"But where have you been, sir?" said Julia, the beauty of the family, and the one whom Mrs. Randolph, in her secret heart, had determined should be Walworth's bride. "Come. You are arraigned. Confess to the court."

Thus beset, Walworth described his visit, though fully aware that he and his fair cousins might differ widely, in regard to the Courtenays. For they, he knew, were worldly in all things.

"La, the Courtenays," said Julia, "you haven't been to see them, now, have you? Well it is odd. And what does Miss Courtenay look like? She used to be called a beauty, though I could never see in what it consisted. I suppose, since she has become a school-marm, as the folk say, she's as round-shouldered, and vinegar-faced as all such feminine professors are."

"By the by," said Mrs. Randolph, as she took her place at the head of the tea-table, "I wonder what's become of the gentleman Miss Courtenay was engaged to. He was from the North, I believe."

"He forgot her, I suppose," said Walworth, "when she lost her fortune."

He spoke sharply, for he felt irritated. Yet, if any one had told him, that Isabel's having been engaged annoyed him, he would have denied it half angrily.

"Poor thing," said Mrs. Randolph, "I hope she'll get a good husband, some time. There's but few people, however, in her present condition of life in the

neighborhood. She ought to go North and marry some mechanic."

Walworth's irritation, strange to say, was not alleviated in the least, by these words. During the whole evening he was absent-minded, and occasionally quite short in his answers to his cousins.

"I declare," said Julia, "I never knew you so cross. I hope you'll get up in a better humor to-morrow." And she left him, and sat down sulkily to her piano, where she thrummed away till bed-time.

CHAPTER XXVIII.

DIOMED.

It was about a week after this time when Isabel, returning from school in the afternoon, saw a horse at the cottage door. Her heart began to beat faster immediately, and her pace quickened, till, on approaching the house. it involuntarily slackened.

As she came up, her mother appeared, escorting Mr. Walworth out. At sight of Isabel an expression of pleased surprise flashed over his face, and, after a courteous greeting, he lingered talking, bridle in hand, till he noticed that they were becoming the mark for observation.

Isabel was in quite a flutter, as she entered the house. Her mother began immediately.

"Oh! my child, what a pity you didn't come sooner," she said. "Mr. Walworth has been here nearly two hours, and you know I never was good at

talking to strangers. He asked if those were your paintings." And she pointed to some on the wall, which had been saved from the general wreck, as Isabel's private property.

"You did not tell him they were, did you? You oughtn't to have answered, dear mamma, but turned the conversation. They are such poor things. I did them when so young."

"To be sure I told him. And he said they were very fine, that was the exact expression; and Mr. Walworth, as you must have seen, is a man of taste. He saw your guitar also, and asked if you played, and I told him what your music-teacher used to say, that you had a touch as masterly as a Spanish lady."

"Ah, mamma," said Isabel, with a smile that was sad in spite of her, "I know now just what you said. There's one thing, dear mamma, you can talk about, and that's the fancied perfections of your daughter. But all don't see with your eyes, and if Mr. Walworth ever comes again, which is most unlikely, please, mamma, please don't praise me to him."

"And why not, my love? And as for his not coming again, almost the last words he said, before he rose to go, were that he would feel honored to accept my invitation to call soon. He is often riding this way he declares. You know he is visiting at his father's cousin's, General Randolph."

"I did not know it, mamma," and she added, as if thinking aloud, "He will hear nothing to our advantage there, I fear."

"If ever I should get rich again," said Mrs. Courtenay, with more emphasis than was usual to her, "I wouldn't visit the Randolphs, though they went down

on their knees to me. To think how intimate they used to pretend to be, and how, after your poor father's death, they ceased visiting us immediately."

"We get rich again!" replied Isabel, almost bitterly; and then, with a sigh, she went about her household duties.

But all the evening, and till she fell into a late slumber that night, the visit of Mr. Walworth kept puzzling her. What could he find, in the humble cottage, to repay him for the loss of the society of his cousin Julia, of whose increasing beauty Isabel, even in her remote circle, heard so much?

There was one answer to this question which brought the warm flush to Isabel's cheek, and made her bosom throb with strange pleasure. Yet this solution seemed so incredible, that she dismissed it at once, and felt mortified at the vanity which suggested it.

A few days after, just as Isabel had closed the school-house, and was preparing to return home, Walworth came up. He was mounted on a superb animal, that seemed to spurn the very earth, yet which stopped at the slight touch which its master gave the bit. In an instant Walworth had sprung to his feet, and was walking by Isabel's side, his steed following as quietly as a lamb, though but lately the foam was flying from his mouth, and his neck was arched as if, in the sublime language of Job, "clothed with thunder."

Why was Isabel, usually so collected, embarrassed now? Why did she answer, at first, incoherently? Why did her pace involuntarily quicken, as if she would escape if she could, though all the time her

heart thrilled with strange happiness, unlike any thing she had ever experienced before?

"What a beautiful horse you have," she said, to cover her embarrassment.

"Yes! I like him," answered Walworth. "But you didn't seem afraid of him, as most ladies are at first."

"Oh! I do so love a fine horse," said Isabel, looking up animatedly.

"Do you ride?" asked Walworth, eagerly.

"I used to."

He paused a moment, and then said,

"I would be so honored, if you would ride with me, some day. I have a second horse almost as handsome as this, and very gentle, a perfect beauty for a lady. They tell me jestingly I am keeping it for my wife."

Isabel's heart bounded at the thought of a canter along some wooded road. It bounded, too, at something in the tone of Walworth, when making his last remark, gay and light though he intended it to be. It was a while before she could compose herself to reply.

"I fear it would be too much trouble—"

"Not the least bit in the world," he quickly interrupted. "Consider, I have nothing to do, while I am on this visit, so that some occupation like this is a prize to me. Besides," and his voice assumed a tender interest, "if it is not presumptuous in one, almost a stranger, to say so, your cheek looks pale with confinement, and a breezy gallop would brighten it wonderfully."

"I will go," said Isabel frankly, looking the thanks

she did not speak. "Of course you know," and she smiled faintly, "that I must wait till Saturday."

Walworth accompanied her to the cottage, saying that he could not think of returning, until he had paid his compliments to Mrs. Courtenay.

When the latter heard of the contemplated ride, she was all in a flutter.

"What is to be done for a riding-skirt?" she said. "You have nothing but that old, faded one, which must be quite out of fashion now. Mr. Walworth will think you a fright. And there isn't time to get one made up—"

"My dear mamma," said Isabel, "we are too poor to think of new riding-skirts. I am thankful, for my part, to have the old one. If Mr. Walworth is shocked at it, I cannot help it; but he is not a person, I fancy, to form an opinion by the dress merely."

Isabel felt something like her old self, when on the back of the bright, glossy chesnut, which Walworth brought for her to ride. The animal was thoroughly broken, but gay and spirited. Her companion watched her with some anxiety at first. But he soon discovered that she was perfectly at home on horse-back, a fact which Diomed appeared to have also found out, for he seemed transported with joy to have such a rider, and curvetted like a child at play, though obedient to the slightest touch of Isabel's finger.

Before the excursion was near over, Isabel was laughing as she had not laughed since her father's death; for, under the excitement of the canter, the bracing air, and Walworth's company, her sorrow and anxieties vanished like a dark mirage dissipated by the cheerful sunshine. Her eyes sparkled, her countenance

brightened inexpressibly, and the rose-tint came back to her cheek, which Walworth had longed to see there.

"You must insist on Mr. Walworth taking a cup of tea with us, my love," said Mrs. Courtenay, appearing at the door, on their return.

Isabel glanced within, and, much to her surprise, saw the tea-table already neatly set. But her wonder ceased when she beheld, in the back-ground, the face of Aunt Vi'let, who, happening to come over that afternoon, had been pressed by Mr. Courtenay into her service.

Walworth did not require much solicitation. Whether it was the exercise, or what, he ate in a manner highly to gratify Aunt Vi'let, especially as he happened particularly to affect her corn cake. Isabel, too, did justice to the meal. As Aunt Vi'let said confidentially to Uncle Peter, when she went home, "de dear honey 'peared more like herself, dan she had since massa died, deed she did!"

This was not the last ride, however, which Isabel took with Walworth. Every Saturday afternoon, the horses came to the door, and Isabel, once more on the back of Diomed, forgot her anxieties, for a time at least. She sometimes, much as she loved riding, regretted that Walworth took so much trouble to have the horses brought so far, every week. Little did she suspect that Diomed never left the village. But that was a secret religiously kept by the landlord, ostlers, and loungers of the village inn, where Diomed was stabled.

Dr. Worthington had not been near the Courtenays for nearly a month, when, one Friday, after Isabel had returned from school, she heard his voice calling from his chaise, which had stopped at the door.

"Hillo there," he cried, "all asleep?"

Isabel came to the door, laughing.

"No, doctor," she answered, "I'm here, and wide awake too. But mamma and Alfred have gone to take a walk. Come in, do. You don't know how glad we are to see you."

The doctor looked in astonishment at Isabel. She seemed ten years younger than when he last saw her, and whole centuries, if we may so speak, happier.

"Why, God bless me, Bella," he said, climbing out of his old-fashioned chaise, "What's the matter with you? Been drinking the Elixir of Life? Give me the receipt, and we'll start a patent medicine at once, that'll outdo all others, and make our fortunes.

"There's nothing the matter, doctor," replied Isabel laughing and blushing. "I fear there's no chance of our making fortunes either. But I'm glad you think I'm looking better."

"Let me look at you," he said, taking her good-humoredly by the shoulders and turning her around. "Why I wouldn't have known you. What cheeks you have. Gad, it must be those iron pills I left you, but though they're sovereign, I never knew 'em to work quite such a cure. There, don't be laughing at me, you jade, for, if you do, I'll give you something to poison you right off. However, this isn't my business. I've stopped to say that Molly declares you must all come over to-morrow and stay till Monday; she's been making some famous cake, and wants you to praise it, I suppose."

Isabel's first thought was that she had agreed to ride, on the morrow, with Walworth as usual. So she answered,

"Thank you, doctor, but I'm afraid we can't—"

"There's no can't in the matter," interrupted the doctor. "What's to prevent, I'd like to know? You have but one short session on Saturday, and I'll send you back, in time, on Monday morning. That lazy nigger Joe, whom I keep because I haven't the heart to sell him, and who won't go away, though I tell him, every day, to do it, he's nothing to do but to come for you; and, if he ain't here, the moment you get off from school, I'll thrash him, I really believe I will, especially as I haven't seen a nigger thrashed, in this neighborhood, since the deluge."

Isabel had now had time to reflect. She thought of all which she was depriving her mother and Alfred. So she told the doctor they would come, resolving to leave a note of apology and explanation for Walworth.

This plan was carried out. But the visit, which formerly would have been one of such pleasure, was dull enough for Isabel. She had not supposed it possible, indeed, that she could regret a ride so much.

If Aunt Vi'let was to be believed, Walworth was even more disappointed. She was at Mrs. Courtenay's, that Saturday, doing up "chores;" and it was in her care, in fact, that Isabel's note was left.

"Tells you what, ole man," she said to her husband that night, "Massa Walworth's dreffful in love with Miss Is'bel. Yer can see it wid half an eye."

"So was Massa Noble," growled Uncle Peter, "least ways folks said so. But it was only de money he was arter."

"Yes, but Miss Is'bel's got no money now, and Massa Walworth knows it. You should a seed him ter day, when he cum ter take Miss Is'bel ridin', as he's been doing, yer knows, dese four weeks.

When he found dat dey was all gone to Dr. Worthington's, he looked dreffful cut, till I gib him de note dat Miss Is'bel wrote, an' den it 'peared as if he neber could git done reading it. Arter dat he stood by de gate, an' looked about, as if he didn't jis know what ter do; and den he jump on his horse, an' rode off like mad, an' sakes alive, what a horse dat is."

Meantime the frequent visits of Walworth to the village began to annoy the fair Julia and her scheming mother. They could not but hear, from more than one source, of his attentions to Isabel. The departure of Diomed they had long known, and wondered why it had been; but now they learned the reason.

"You're back early to-day for a Saturday," said Mrs. Randolph to him, on the evening in question. "Pray is any thing the matter at the village? None of our friends have eloped, I hope, with a stage driver."

The fire flashed to Walworth's eyes at this irritating speech. Impetuous by nature, it was only by severe discipline that he was able to control himself. But before he could find words to reply, he recollected what was due to his own self-respect, and so answered calmly,

"Nothing of the kind, I assure you: at least to my knowledge."

His composure annoyed Mrs. Randolph. She replied tauntingly.

"Nor any school marm made a romantic love-match with the head boy of her first class."

"Mamma," said Julia, who had been an interested listener to the conversation, and who thought this a

good opportunity to vent her pique at Walworth, "you touch a delicate point. You know, Eldred has always been enthusiastic, a sort of modern knight-errant on the look-out for beauty in distress, and really it is disparaging him too much to put him on a level with some big, stupid lout of a half-grown boy."

"Spare me, cousin mine," said Walworth, flinging himself on the sofa, at the side of Julia, "I am not made, you know, for an encounter of wits, and so throw myself on your mercy. Let us make a truce. I have but one condition, to stipulate for," and he spoke with seriousness. "It is that Miss Courtenay shall not be the butt of your merriment. Her misfortunes should make her sacred. As for her teaching school, it is to be deplored, perhaps, as a misfortune, at least in one so fitted, in every way, to fill a higher sphere. That she sacrifices herself to that wearisome vocation, from the motive she does, is to her honor. Indeed I am so Quixotic on this point, that if you abuse her for it, I shall be driven into defending her; and what deplorable consequences that may lead to, you may possibly conjecture. Forbid it, you will say, all the blood of the Randolphs and Walworths."

That night Mrs. Randolph called her daughters into her dressing-room, before she retired, and said,

"My dears, we went too far with Eldred, this evening. The readiest way to drive him into liking Miss Courtenay is to talk against her."

"It is my opinion," said the elder, glancing maliciously at Julia, "that he likes Miss Courtenay already. You know, Julia, she was thought prettier than you, at her birth-night ball."

"Pooh!" cried the beauty, giving her head a defi-

ant toss, "I've no fear of her. They tell me she is grown as thin as a rail and as pale as chalk."

"Eldred's only teasing you, my love," said the mother. "Don't get out of humor with him, but pet him in spite of all. I know the men. They like to have a fuss made with them, and your cousin is no better than the rest. He's a husband, too, worth catching; twenty thousand a-year, at the least."

The next day, the fair Julia, acting on this advice, renewed her assault on Walworth's heart; and with such success that he began to think he had somewhat misjudged her; Julia herself told her mother, that night, that they had quite mistaken Walworth, for though he was pleased with Miss Courtenay, and evidently pitied her, he had never thought of loving her.

Isabel, meantime, on her return from the doctor's, thought it not impossible that she might hear from Walworth. But she waited, day after day in vain. She felt hurt at this neglect, especially when Saturday arrived without bringing him; for she had confidently expected that, on that day, he would surely make his appearance.

"What's the matter with Mr. Walworth?" said her mother. "Have you offended him, my dear?"

Isabel made an evasive reply, and crept up to her room. She began now to believe she had offended him, indeed; and she could think of no way in which she had done it, unless by breaking her engagement to ride with him. She had learned the particulars of his behaviour, on receiving her note, and though they had gratified her strongly at the time Aunt Vi'let rehearsed them, she began now to fear, on a review of them, that they were susceptible of a very different interpretation.

The pain his desertion caused her first revealed fully to Isabel the state of her own heart. For hitherto she had only been conscious of a daily increasing feeling of happiness, and had not paused to analyze its origin. But now she was aware that she loved him with all the intensity of her nature.

How, in truth, could she have avoided it? Had he not, almost daily, sought her society? Did not every noble, generous and lofty sentiment in her own heart find its echo in his? Who, of all those of the other sex she had ever met, was so eloquent in speech, so refined in manner, so tender to human woe, so sacredly conscientious? And, more than all, for this was at the foundation of the love which Isabel had insensibly began to lavish on him, he had soothed the dying couch of her brother.

Isabel's first attachment had not been love. The handsome and dashing, though heartless Frederick Noble, had affected, for a time, her girlish fancy. But her maturer sense would have rejected him, as a lover, or tempted her to become indifferent to him as a husband. It was a mercy, indeed, that circumstances had revealed to her his true character, while yet there was time for escape.

Isabel had, in one short year, passed the irrevocable gulf that separates the girl from the woman. She could not now have loved the same person as then. Her taste was more fastidious, her judgment more accurate. The loftiest reality of manhood was required to fill her heart now. Such she could love with a fervor a thousand fold warmer than she could have ever felt, as a girl, for Mr. Noble. And to such a love there could be no successor.

This love had come upon her now. She knew it at last. But she knew it too late, God help her!

All the next week, and all the week after, she looked for Walworth. Finally she heard that he had left Gen. Randolph's. Rumor said he had gone North to purchase wedding gifts for the beautiful Julia, to whom, it was affirmed, he was to be married early in the fall. And though Isabel could scarcely believe this, yet neither could she gainsay it. Her trust in others was gone. For who should she believe, if Walworth was faithless?

Do you say she ought to have cast him from her heart? She tried to do it. But when one, hopeless and friendless, like she had been before Walworth came, finds sympathy and encouragement, and learns once again to dream of happiness, it is not an easy thing to give up the bright illusion.

You may talk of doing it, fair lady, sitting in your gay boudoir. But go down into the dusty highway of life, and there discard, without a regret, if you can, the one who has sustained your wearied form, bathed your bleeding feet, and protected you with his mantle from the storm.

CHAPTER XXIX.

THE FUGITIVES AGAIN.

"CORA!"

It was the voice of Charles that spoke.

"What is it, dear?"

The room was a garret, damp and cheerless, al-

though the season was summer. A miserable bed, made up on the bare floor, one chair, a table, and a few utensils for cooking, comprised the entire furniture of the apartment. The plaster on the walls was broken, and in one corner the rain leaked through.

Cora had been sitting, by the solitary window, sewing, with the baby on her lap. She rose as she spoke, laid the child on the foot of the bed, and came and knelt down by her husband.

You would not have known Charles for the bright, handsome mulatto who, little more than a year before, had left his master's family in Virginia. He had become emaciated almost to a skeleton. The eye was sunken, and fearfully bright. It needed but a single glance to see that he was in the very last stages of consumption.

"I can't last long now," he said, speaking with difficulty, and looking tenderly at his wife. "Give me your hand. Let me hold it to the last. There."

The tears, at these words, dropped fast from Cora's eyes, but she made no answer. She could not speak indeed. She seemed choking.

"I've nothing to leave you, not even money to take you back to Virginia," he said. "Oh! if I only knew you wouldn't starve, after I'm gone—"

Cora sobbed aloud.

"Don't, don't talk so," she said. "We have managed to live somehow, all the time, and God will help us yet."

"It's been dreadful though," said Charles slowly, as if every word cost an effort, "since I lost my place on getting so sick—"

She interrupted him eagerly.

"But I haven't minded it, dear, except on your

account. Don't think of me. Maybe, too, you'll get well yet."

He faintly shook his head.

"Never, Cora. I don't think I shall live till morning. Let me see baby once more and kiss it. Oh! it seems so hard to have to wait till the resurrection to see you and it again."

Cora rose and brought the baby, which she held out to him, kneeling as before.

"There," he said slowly, after kissing it. "Good bye, baby. God bless you."

The tears were now falling like rain from poor Cora's eyes. She replaced the infant on the foot of the bed, though it stretched out its arms, smiling, as if it would fain have gone again to its father. Then she took the hand of her husband once more.

"You're not afraid to die, are you, Charles?" she said, at last.

"No, I feel happy to go, only for you and baby, and that, that's very hard. Blessed be God I don't dread the grave! You've been a precious wife to me, for you've always been good, even when I didn't do what I should, and I've got religion through your telling me of the Bible and praying for me. We'll meet in glory, by'm by, I hope and believe."

"You don't know how glad it makes me to hear you talk so," sobbed Cora. "To have thought that I was never, never to have seen you again—" For a minute she could not proceed. Then she resumed more calmly. "I'll always be thinkin', if I love the Lord Jesus, that I'll be joined to you again in heaven. And oh! I'll try so hard to bring baby up to be good, and to follow us."

She could not proceed. Big, choking sobs stopped

her utterance, though she had endeavored, for Charles' sake, to be composed.

After awhile the dying man said,

"Cora, I want you, if ever you can get there, to tell missis that I asked her forgiveness. If I could only see her again, or Miss Isabel. But not my will, Lord," he said, raising his eyes above, "but thine be done."

"I'll tell her, if I have to beg my way back to her, walkin' all the road."

"Maybe there'll somebody come forward to send you back. You ought to go. It's the best thing to be done."

"It's the right thing, Charles, and that's always the best, you know."

"Yes, dear," he answered pressing her hand. "I wish I'd a believed that a year go."

After a minute or two of silence, he said,

"Cora, sing me that hymn you're so fond of—'When I can read my title clear.' I'd like to hear it again."

The almost broken-hearted wife began to sing, but had to re-commence several times before she could go on. At last her voice gathered strength. The rich, sweet notes came pouring forth, as she sang verse after verse, until the passing strangers on the side-walk outside, far below, stopped and listened.

Charles lay with his eyes fixed on her face, his countenance expressing a holy rapture mingled with the intensest love.

Suddenly she felt him clutch her hand tighter, and simultaneously he seemed to gasp for breath. It was the work of an instant for her to raise him up.

He turned a thankful look on her, which, as the

difficulty of respiration increased, changed to one of pleading helplessness. Oh! the utter despair of that look. To have answered that appeal, she would have given worlds. But she could do nothing. She could only gaze, breathless with agony, in return.

Not a word passed. The struggle for breath grew more eager. Turning imploringly to the window, as if for air, more air, the dying man put both arms down, and holding himself erectly braced, concentrated all his strength into one last, mighty effort, for air.

It was in vain. Suddenly his muscles relaxed, and he fell back. He was dead.

CHAPTER XXX.

THE RETURN.

It was twilight. Isabel sat alone, for Mrs. Courtenay and Alfred had gone out for a walk, and had not yet come back.

A month had elapsed since Walworth's departure, and Isabel had long ceased to expect his return. Never had she felt so friendless. Dr. Worthington had not been over since their visit to him, so that it seemed as if even he had deserted them.

The gathering dusk soon darkened the room. The sad silence of the moonless night was broken only by what was still more melancholy, the wail of a whip-poor-will. Sailing on slow wings, the bird flew to and fro, like a thing of evil omen, across the bit of sky seen through the window.

Oh! how utterly desolate was Isabel. Life had ceased to have any charms for her. She had struggled heroically, braving disappointment after disappointment; but the stoutest heart must give out at last, and she had energy no longer for the strife. Her sense of duty taught her to battle on, while life lasted, but the spring of hope was gone.

Sometimes the old longing for the quiet of the grave would come over her with a power altogether irresistible. She felt that it would be comparative bliss merely to be at rest. At rest even in the narrow coffin, for there, beneath the slumberous elms of the church-yard, no sound from the great ocean of life, surging and roaring without, could ever penetrate.

This sentiment absorbed her whole being now. In vain she tried to shake it off. She rose and walked the room, hoping to divert it by action, but sat down after a while, feeling more hopelessly desolate than ever. Finally she began to sing a hymn, which lately had haunted her almost incessantly, the tears falling heavily and fast.

"I would not live alway;
I ask not to stay,
Where storm after storm
Rises dark on my way."

The melancholy of these words, deepened by the melancholy of her voice, interrupted by frequent sobs, was heart-breaking to hear. A profound sigh attested their influence on a listener, who had entered unperceived through the open door. But Isabel heard not the sigh. She continued to sing on, her voice faltering more

and more, until at last it became smothered in suffocating sobs.

But now a hand was laid on her shoulder, and a manly voice, yet one made, by sympathy, almost feminine in tone, said,

"Isabel!"

She started up, with a half scream. Dusky as it was, there still lingered light enough to show that she had not been mistaken, that it was Walworth before her; and she drew back, distant and haughty.

"What makes you so sad, to-night, Miss Courtenay?" he said, holding out his hand.

"Good evening, Mr. Walworth," she replied, in a cold, constrained tone, without noticing his question.

Her manner puzzled him. He said anxiously, not knowing how to interpret it,

"Has any thing happened? Are Mrs. Courtenay and Alfred well?"

"Yes, both are well, thank you. The twilight, perhaps, has made me sad. Will you take a seat?"

There was an awkward silence, which Walworth broke, by saying,

"How is Diomed?"

"Diomed!" she replied in a tone of surprise.

"Yes! Haven't you ridden him, as I asked you, in my note, to oblige me by doing?"

"Your note!"

"Yes! The note I sent you, when I was summoned North."

"I never received one."

"How strange! It is perfectly unaccountable. I left it at Gen. Randolph's to be delivered to you immediately, and in it begged you to use Diomed as if I had been at home."

Isabel's heart throbbed with pleasure at this explanation. Walworth waited a moment, but she still maintaining silence, he went on,

"I had not time to come over myself, for I only received the intelligence," he said, "on the Monday morning after I was here, about an hour before the stage passed, and it was a case in which time was worth thousands. I had, in fact, a large sum due me, which energetic action promised to recover. Fortunately I succeeded in my object, and had the pleasure," he added, "of recovering for Mrs. Courtenay also a considerable sum belonging to your late father."

"Ah!" said Isabel, starting. "What—how?"

"When I was abroad, now nearly eighteen months ago," replied Walworth, "a heavy mercantile house failed, having a large sum of money in their hands, the whole products, in truth, of two years' crops. Lately a vessel, belonging to this house, and trading, at the time of the failure, in the Pacific, has returned with a valuable cargo on board. I heard of the fact from a friend in New York, who added that there was evidently a design, on the part of Smith, Beam & Co., fraudulently to make way with the proceeds. I hastened at once to the North. Arrived there I seized the vessel and cargo, under process of law, and then accidentally discovering that your father, having endorsed for this very firm, had lost largely by them, I wrote for Dr. Worthington to come on, and, as executor, put in his claim also. Did he tell you nothing of it?"

"I haven't seen the doctor since our visit there," said Isabel, no longer speaking constrainedly.

"He was, probably, too busied. Or, it may be,

did not wish to give you hope, until he could promise success. However, all is right now. I left him in New York to arrange a few matters of form. He will come by the next stage."

"Thank God!" exclaimed Isabel. "Mamma's privations are over now."

Walworth rose, and bending over her, took her hand.

"They would have been over before now, if I had been at home," he said. Then added quickly, "with your consent, Isabel."

She turned her head away, but made no reply.

For a moment he was deceived. His voice trembled, and he said,

"Can you love me, Isabel? Or are your affections still another's?"

She looked around in astonishment.

"I understood," he continued, more hopefully, "that you were engaged, some time ago———"

"I?"

"Yes, to Mr. Noble. I have loved you, almost since I first saw you, and only the fear of that kept me silent so long."

She smiled now as she answered. "I had almost forgotten that such a person existed. I never was engaged to him. I believe," and she spoke with scornful accent, "that he once loved the heiress, but not Isabel Courtenay; and even if she could have returned his love, in time, he gave her no opportunity, when she became poor."

"I seek Isabel, not the heiress," said Walworth, full of the happiness her manner inspired. "I am even obstinate enough to say," he added gaily, "I take her without a dollar, or do not take her at all. What-

ever Doctor Worthington recovers of the estate must be settled on Alfred."

Isabel made no reply, but as her hand was not withdrawn none other was needed. When Mrs. Courtenay returned, which she did soon after, she found Walworth and Isabel sitting silently together; but even she, unobservant as she was, could not but notice that it was a silence full of happiness.

Walworth rose. "Allow me, my dear madam, to be the first," he said, "to congratulate you on your restored rights." And he proceeded, concisely, to acquaint Mrs. Courtenay with what he had already informed Isabel.

Mrs. Courtenay could only reply with exclamations. "Dear me! Could it be possible? But she had always said that there was something wrong." These, and similar remarks, interrupted Walworth continually.

"But I had nearly forgotten," continued Walworth, "to say that the doctor, to-morrow, will bring you back a repentant prodigal. No, I can scarcely call her that. I mean Cora, your former servant."

Isabel, as well as Mrs. Courtenay, now uttered an exclamation of surprise.

Walworth told his auditors how he had first become acquainted with Cora, and though he narrated the incident as modestly as he could, Isabel's heart swelled high at his generous heroism. He then went on.

"I did not, however, know whose servants they had been," he said, "until this last visit North. I stopped at my usual hotel, but missing Charles among the waiters, asked what had become of him. They told me, in reply, that they had been compelled to discharge him, in consequence of his illness, and that he had since died. In haste, as I was, I yet found

time to discover his widow, whom I found eager to return to you. Indeed it was not she, but her husband, who is to blame for their departure."

"I am so glad to hear that Cora was not ungrateful," said Isabel. "I will do what can be done to soothe her sorrows, poor thing."

"She bears," resumed Walworth, "her husband's dying petition for forgiveness. I arranged that Doctor Worthington should bring her and her babe with him."

Directly Alfred fell asleep, and Isabel arose to put him to bed. During her absence, Walworth seized the opportunity, to acquaint Mrs. Courtenay with his love for her daughter, and to solicit her sanction for his suit. Mrs. Courtenay scarcely knew what to say. So many surprises in one evening, quite overcame her. She stammered her approval, however, at last, and added that, if she had gone over the entire world to choose a husband for her daughter, she could not have found one more to her taste than Mr. Walworth.

"She has been a dutiful child," she said, with emotion, in conclusion, "and, in parting with her, I part with a treasure indeed. I do not know what would have become of us, if it had not been for her."

"I learned to love her," answered Walworth, with seriousness, "before I had seen her; and, after I knew her, my love grew daily. Her heroic and self-sacrificing character as a daughter proved to me how noble a wife she would make."

"Never did I hear a complaint from her," answered Mrs. Courtenay, who now that she was going to lose Isabel, was more than ever alive to her merits. "Ah! Mr. Walworth, I don't know what I shall do without her.'

"I will not deprive you of her all the year," said Walworth. "Part of the time we will give to you. My own estates lie in a part of the State so much warmer than this, that our summers must, of necessity, be spent elsewhere; and there is no place where we will more gladly spend them, nor one better fitted to pass the sultry months in, than this comparatively cool and mountainous region."

CHAPTER XXXI.

THE HOMESTEAD AGAIN.

WALWORTH had said that the doctor might be expected the following day. But staid middle age is not as active as a young lover, and accordingly three days elapsed before the doctor came.

He made his appearance, at last. It was Saturday, and just before dinner, when his old fashioned chaise drove up to the door.

"Ah! Sly boots, you're there, are you?" he cried, good-humoredly, addressing Isabel, as he advanced to the entrance. And giving a hand to Mrs. Courtenay, and another to Isabel, as they hastened to welcome him, he continued. "To think how like an old fool I behaved, believing my iron pills had brought back the bloom to your cheek, pussy. But the miracle is revealed now. Ah! you see I'm his confidant, and know all about it," he added, laughing, as Isabel stood blushing and all in confusion. "We old fellows have

to be resorted to for counsel, not only in matters regarding the physical health, but in affairs of the heart also."

Isabel had now had time to recover herself a little. She understood the doctor too well to be offended, for he liked his joke, she knew, no matter at whose expense. So, laughing, she replied.

"I suppose I'm to thank you for him entirely."

"Indeed you are, sauce-box," he retorted. "He was almost out of heart, I can assure you, and ready to abandon all hope, when I first discovered his case. You were so much too good for him, he declared; and all that; you know how these sighing lovers talk. But, faith, I told him that if he wasn't good enough for you, I didn't know who was: and that the best thing he could do would be to return to Old Virginia as fast as railroads, steamboats, and mail-coaches would bring him. I should have known from your blushes, missy, that he had taken my advice, even if I had not seen him to-day."

Nothing could equal the overflowing hilarity of the doctor's looks and tones as he thus essayed to tease Isabel. But now having gained a chair, and given his hat to her, he turned to Mrs. Courtenay.

"But I've done with this wild creature," he said, with a wave of the hand toward Isabel. "She never told me a syllable, though she had all that Sunday to do it in. I shall never forgive her, the more especially as she allowed me, the minx, to attribute her gay looks altogether to the iron pills. No, I have done with her. So what I have to say, I shall say to you, Mrs. Courtenay. You've heard the news, I suppose, of part of your fortune being recovered?"

"Yes," said Mrs. Courtenay, smiling; while Isabel,

coming up to her mother's chair, stood provokingly behind it, looking at the doctor with laughing eyes, as if to say, "You see I will listen, whether or not."

"What would you think," cried the doctor triumphantly, "of getting back the old place?"

"Getting back the old place," said Mrs. Courtenay and Isabel simultaneously.

"Yes, the Courtenay homestead, which was in the family nearly a century and a half."

"Oh!" said Isabel, advancing, and taking the doctor's hand earnestly, "is there any hope of it? Don't jest now?"

"Hope of it? It's done already," answered the physician in an exulting tone. "You needn't look so surprised. Ain't I executor? Can't I invest all monies as I please? And haven't I bought it back? There's the deed if you doubt it."

He had no fears that they would doubt it. Isabel did not even look at the deed. As soon as she became convinced that he was really in earnest, the glad tears rushed to her eyes, and impulsively putting her arms about the doctor's neck, she kissed him again and again, saying,

"You are a dear doctor now, indeed you are. God bless you!"

"We are really to have the old place again," said Mrs. Courtenay. "Well, I declare. But I'm glad more for the children than for myself. I always said it was very cruel to turn us out of it, and that, I had no doubt, all would come right by and bye."

"But how was it?" said Isabel, after a moment.

"Why, you see," answered the doctor, "I had long known that the old homestead had been bid in. Messrs. Skin & Flint, the harpies, thought they could

get a better price for it, by this trick of theirs. I knew, too, that one or two parties had been haggling about it, all the year, thinking they could induce old Skin to take less than he asked. So what did I do, when I recovered your money, but take advantage of my being North to out-bid the others; shake the post-notes in the face of the wrinkled, mahogany-visaged usurer; and demand a 'yes' or 'no' immediately. I got the place, as I knew I should, and now there's enough left to buy back a sufficient number of the old servants to work it."

"Mamma, mamma," cried Isabel, as excited almost as a child, "let us have Uncle Peter and his family, at any price."

"Uncle Peter's already yours—"

"Oh! you dear, good man," cried Isabel, again rewarding him with a kiss. "Why you're like the princess in the fairy-tale, and actually anticipate one's wishes."

"Oh!" replied the doctor, "I'm a fairy, am I? That's the reason you kiss me. But it wouldn't do to tell it to Walworth, even with that explanation; though, since I think of it, I must tell him, if only to have my revenge about those iron——"

But the little hand of Isabel, playfully put over his huge mouth, which it scarcely covered notwithstanding, stopped the completion of the sentence.

"Well," grumbled the doctor, laughingly, as she released him, "since you've let me go, I'll promise to say nothing more about the iron—"

But Isabel's finger, held archly up, cut short his words; and he continued, resuming the subject of Uncle Peter.

"I had to buy him at once, or I shouldn't have got him, I'm afraid, at all; for Mr. Clifford was in no

hurry, I knew, to part with him. I happened, fortunately, to be summoned to Mr. Clifford's, to see one of Uncle Peter's children who is quite ill——"

"I hadn't heard of it," interrupted Isabel, "I must go and see it. Which is it?"

"It's the boy, and he's very bad. So, after we came away from the cabin, I told this to Mr. Clifford, and as he loves money pretty well, he began to grumble about losing a boy that would in a few years, become one of the best laborers on the farm. I had been wondering, all day, how I should best broach the subject of buying Uncle Peter, and this suggested itself to me as a good opening. I told him, accordingly, that I knew a party, who liked Uncle Peter so well, that they would purchase the whole family, at an upshot price, and run the risk of the child's recovery. He only asked me one question, for he's a good fellow in all things but his love of money, and that was whether they were to be separated, or taken South; and when I told him no, he closed at once. But," added the doctor laughing, as he recalled his manœuvre, "before I came away, he told me I'd surprised him into a foolish thing, for Uncle Peter was almost invaluable to him, and that, if I was willing, he'd rather not conclude the bargain. But I answered that his word was passed, and when I added that they were for you, he said no more. You see that being among Yankees," he added chuckling, "has made me as keen as a brier."

"We can't thank you too much," said Isabel. "Only to think, mamma, you get back both Uncle Peter's family and Cora. Was ever any thing so nice?"

"I had forgotten Cora," interrupted the doctor

"You know, I presume, that I brought her home with me."

"Oh! yes," replied Isabel. "I had forgotten, for the time. Where is she?"

"She's at home with Molly. I couldn't fetch her to-day, poor thing? Do you know that they were almost starved to death? That Charles, all through his illness, had no doctor? That he was buried as a pauper?"

"Dear me," cried Mrs. Courtenay, "was ever any thing so dreadful?"

"Yes, madam," said the doctor. "They were, in fact, lucky to get off so cheaply. I heard of a pious old Methodist woman, who had borne an exemplary character all her life, that died, this Spring, in the same city as Charles; and when they went up into her garret, to see why she had not been down that day, they found her a corpse on the boards of the floor, she not actually having a bed. It's more than probable, too, she died of starvation. Charles would have had to die in that way, too, if he had been alone. But Cora managed, by working her fingers to the bone, to get along somehow; it's a miracle how she did it. She was almost broken down, however, when Mr. Walworth found her again. Six months more would have killed her too. You'll scarcely know her, she's such a skeleton."

"Poor, poor Cora. How I long to tell her we forgive all," said Isabel, with tears in her eyes.

"That's the way with you women," broke forth the doctor, in an affected rage. "You pity those that don't deserve pity half as much as yourselves." The doctor could not, even yet, forgive Charles and Cora. "I tell you, young lady, that such as you

suffer more, in your little finger, to use old Cranmer's metaphor, from poverty, than such as she in their whole body. And I tell you more. They bring sorrow on themselves, while God sends you yours. Even the slave, sold to the sugar plantations, and torn from his family at that, doesn't endure a quarter of what you've gone through, this last year; and what, but for most extraordinary luck, let me tell you, you'd have to go through for your whole life, as the majority who meet with reverses do."

"Don't call it luck, doctor," said Isabel earnestly, "It is God's goodness."

"So it is. So it is. But, bless me, how the time has flown. I must be off. You are to come over, this afternoon, Molly says, and stay till Monday; and, in your ear, pussy, somebody else is to come also. Indeed, it would be as well for you to send a part of your wardrobe, in the carriage which I have ordered for mamma and Alfred; for a certain gentleman, who seems to think he has already a right to dictate *your* movements, told me that he and you would come on horseback. Ah! Sly Boots," he added, laughing, and shaking his finger at Isabel as he went off, "you've got an adorer, you think, as all young ladies do, yet here he is saying peremptorily what you'll do, without as much as consulting you. He'll turn out a regular Blue Beard, my word for it."

But that Isabel did not think so was evident from her merry shake of the head at the doctor. It was proved, even more conclusively, a couple of hours later, when, on Diomed appearing at the door, she came forth, already equipped in riding costume.

Never had Isabel spent two such days as those that followed. Never, in her earlier life, had she

dreamed she could be so happy. For, reader, we must first suffer, before we can enjoy.

It was a double holiday, so that they did not leave the doctor's till Tuesday morning. On Sunday, Isabel appeared at her old church, and sat in her old seat. Grateful to God, beyond description, was she, on that sweet Sabbath morning. It increased her thankfulness to know that Walworth was beside her, and that he read from the same prayer-book, for a pure love is closely allied to religion.

On Monday such a stroll as the two lovers took together! Crossing the brow of a hill, that rose just back of the doctor's dwelling, they sat down on a rock, on the opposite slope, for the Courtenay mansion lay in full view, from that point, far off in the valley. For hours they remained there, sometimes in silence, but more often asking each other questions such only as lovers ask; questions that, in old age, we pronounce idle, but which we all have asked, if we have ever loved; questions as to when each began to see the other with eyes of affection, and those of similar happy import.

Then, in the evening, what a long and profound consultation took place, respecting the fortune thus partially recovered for the Courtenays. The doctor, as executor, insisting on Isabel's having her share, but Walworth stoutly refusing to take her on those terms; and the doctor finally yielding, with a sly remark that he "gave in solely to save Isabel's life, for she would go into a rapid consumption if he didn't."

So it was determined that what was left of the estate should be settled on Alfred. "And a pretty thing it will make, by the time he comes of age," said

the doctor, "for he and his mother won't spend half the yearly crop, unless they prove extravagant." Mrs. Courtenay, however, insisted on Cora going with Isabel, to which the latter gladly assented.

Walworth pressed for a speedy marriage. But Isabel pleaded the school, and all felt the force of this. "I pledged myself to the parents," she said, "and must not abandon it until I find a substitute." It was finally agreed, therefore, that she should continue to teach until a successor could be procured.

"I would object, if I dared," said Walworth, "but a duty, when once assumed, cannot be lightly laid aside. However, if there is but one good substitute in the states, she shall be forthcoming before long."

"I've no doubt of that," laughed the doctor. "You'll take sandal and scallop-shell, pilgrim-wise, and go over the republic barefoot, but what you'll find one."

Walworth, however, took good care to procure a substitute, without having to leave Isabel at all. The new teacher had been educated for her profession, and Isabel, in surrendering her charge, felt satisfied that it was being delegated to hands even more able than her own. Walworth, ashamed of the stipend formerly paid, added enough to it from his private purse to make it, not only remunerative, but really desirable, especially for one who, like the new teacher, had only herself to support.

By the time October had come all was ready for the marriage. The ceremony took place in the little church, where Isabel had been baptized when an infant, and the same holy man of God, grown to be a silver-headed patriarch, officiated now as then. The doctor, glorious in a new suit of glossy black, gave the

bride away, and looked most determinedly merry, perhaps because of Mrs. Courtenay's tears and the bride's.

"I can't understand you ladies at all," he said, addressing his wife, who was almost crying herself. "Here's my pet Isabel would have broken her heart, if Walworth had gone and married Miss Julia; yet now, when she's being fastened to him as tight as ever splinter to a broken arm, she's crying as if undergoing the cruellest hardship imaginable. By the bye," he said, "where are the Randolphs? I know Mrs. Courtenay had vowed she would never recognize them, but Isabel coaxed her to let them be invited, for they're second cousins to Walworth, you know."

"The ladies have all gone North," answered his wife. "I thought you had heard it. Mrs. Randolph says it's for her health, but it is well known it's to avoid being here. After her suppressing Mr. Walworth's note to Isabel, she's ashamed to show her face. However, there's the general."

"Ay! he never had any thing to do with his wife's schemes on Walworth, I'll warrant; and I'm glad to see he has had the courage to remain behind for the wedding."

After the ceremony, the bridal company, including Mrs. Courtenay, Alfred, and the doctor and wife, drove to Courtenay Hall, which they all, with the exception of the two latter, visited now, for the first time, since its recovery. For the doctor, and especially his wife, had been busy, going and coming, for a fortnight and more, arranging furniture, and preparing every thing for the reception of the returning family. Not a few valuable gifts had gone there from Walworth, though he had not visited it himself. Isabel's boudoir, Mrs. Courtenay's room, and several other

favorite apartments had been restored, indeed, at his expense, to their original appearance, though none of the parties more immediately interested knew of it.

On reaching the vicinity of the house, the doctor proposed that they should alight, and walk for the rest of the distance. His object in this was soon apparent. For scarcely had the bridal company descended, when the servants, headed by Uncle Peter, appeared arranging themselves on the lawn, at the foot of the portico steps.

The tears came into Isabel's eyes. There were all the old, familiar faces, Aunt Vi'let's being prominent in the foreground. Ties of various kinds bound her to each and all. The children had formed her old Sunday school class; the girls of her own age had been accustomed to come to her for advice; their elders had waited on her, both when well and when sick; and the old and decrepid, for even such were there, had been the objects of her charity ever since she could remember.

As the bridal company approached, Isabel on one arm of Walworth, and Mrs. Courtenay on another, the emotion of the servants, which had been restrained with difficulty, broke forth into loud sobs of joyous weeping and exclamations of delight or benediction. Uncle Peter, with tears rolling down his cheeks, was the first to speak.

"God bless yer, ole missis. God bless yer, chile. God bless yer masser!" These were his words as, almost choked with happy feelings, he welcomed Mrs. Courtenay, Isabel, and Walworth.

There was not a dry eye, you may be sure, in the bridal company. Slowly the principal personages advanced, the excited servants clinging around them, each

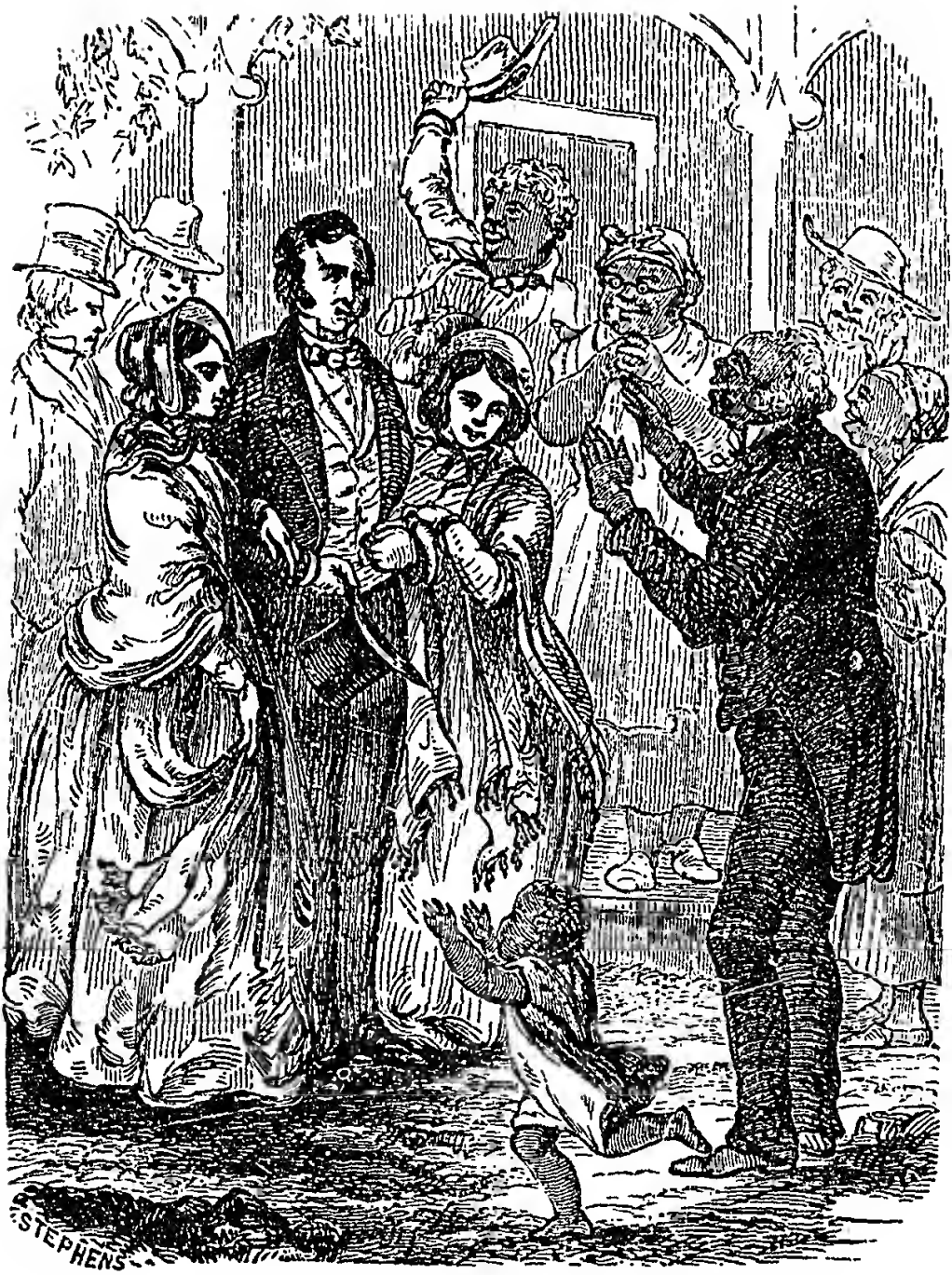
striving to press nearest to Isabel, for she was the favorite still, until at last further progress seemed impossible. But, at this crisis, Doctor Worthington came to the rescue, by pronouncing the cabalistic words, "Now 'Tony," when, as if by magic, that personage appeared, leaning against the basement of the portico, a little to one side of the steps, violin in hand; and, immediately after, there began to reel from its strings the famous old Jacobite tune, which, to betray a secret, the doctor had taught him expressly for the occasion, "The king shall have his own again."

The effect was electric. The crowd parted, right and left, on the instant. It was full time, too, for the emotion of Isabel had been so great that she almost fainted; but this happy change, and one so entirely unexpected, relieved her overwrought heart

The bridal company had now no difficulty in reaching the portico, where they paused until 'Tony finished his tune, when the servants, as if by one accord, burst into a cheer for the bride, which, however, the musician took entirely to himself, bowing in return with all the fervor of Ole Bull, or Vieux Temps, after a successful performance of the "Carnival" has brought down the house.

Neither the groom nor his bride could avoid smiling as they turned to enter the portal. Another huzza accompanied their disappearance. This had no sooner died away, than 'Tony's fiddle was heard again; but now the tune was, "Ole Dan Tucker;" and, in obedience to it, the servants filed off to their quarters, where most of them spent the day in dancing.

Dr. Worthington still lives, doing as much good as ever under his old genial roughness of character. Mrs. Courtenay and Alfred also survive. The latter has



"GOD BLESS YER, MISSIS."

grown quite a fine lad. Mr. Sharpe is richer than ever, but has altered in no other respect; for he still practically "devours widows' houses, and for a pretence makes long prayers."

Isabel and Walworth have now been married for several years. The last time we heard of them, they were on a visit at Courtenay Hall, with two lovely children, of whom the eldest, a boy, was called Horace, and in whom the fond eyes of the mother fancied that a resemblance, more than that of the name, could be traced to her lost brother. The youngest, a lovely little girl, had been baptized Isabel, at the father's instance, and promised to be of the same elevated style of beauty as her mother. Let us hope she may be as good.

In a beautiful rural cemetery, attached to one of our northern cities, there is a monument of white Italian marble, which invariably attracts the notice of visitors. It is a shattered column, placed on a slightly elevated pedestal. One side of the latter bears the inscription, "Horace Courtenay, Ætat XIV." and the opposite face the Latin words "*Requiescat in Pace.*" On the other two sides are quotations from Scripture. One is the text referring to children, "For their angels do always behold the face of our Father in Heaven:" the other is that equally glorious assurance, "We are sown a natural body, we shall be raised a spiritual body."

Isabel and Walworth act towards their servants as towards immortal beings, committed to their charge. It is the talent, they know, for which the Master will, one day, call them to account. They have offered frequently to purchase and emancipate Uncle Peter

and his family; but the old man has invariably replied,

"No, God bless yer, I'd rather be a slave here, under a good masser, dan a free colored man North. By'm bye, p'raps, my chil'en may take yer offer, ef de Lord, by dat time, opens de way for de African."

Meantime, reader, whether you live in the North or the South, *be the good master;* for there lies the kernel of the whole matter. "Have the poor," as Scripture says, "always with you." Remember, that the laboring classes, be they called operatives or slaves, have no friend but God, if you, their employers or owners, are not that friend.

Remember also that human hearts, philanthropic hearts, Christian hearts are as common on one side of the Potomac as the other; and that each "knoweth its own bitterness" best. If ever you are tempted to speak harshly of social institutions other than your own, recall the words of Christ, "He that is without sin, let him cast the first stone."

THE END.